ECCLESIASTES, or *the Preacher.*

SOLOMONS *SERMON MADE*

to the people, teaching euery *man howe to order his life, ſo as* they may come to true and euerlaſting happines.

With a Paraphraſe, or ſhort expoſition thereof, made by Theodore Beza.

Tranſlated out of Latine into Engliſh.

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ECCLESIASTES,
or the Preacher.

A Paraphrase vpon that Sermon that *Solomon* made concerning the soueraigne good.

CHAP. 1.

Vers. 1. (These are) *the woordes of the* Preacher *the sonne of* Dauid, *King of* Ierusalem.

THE PARAPHRASE.

GIVE diligent heed and attendance O all degrees and estates of men, yee shall heare a Preacher, not of the common sort, but euen a King, making a Sermon vnto you, and that, of such pointes, as of all other, are most necessarie, for the guiding as wel of priuate as publike affairs. A King I say, the Sonne of worthie *DAVID*, and, albeit not called to the Priestes office, yet placed by GOD in *Ierusalem*, as in the verie Castle of trueth and religion, for the holy and wise rule and gouernement of you.

Vers. 2. *Vanitie of vanities, sayth the* Preacher, *vanitie of vanities, all these thinges* (are) *vanitie.*

And this is the summe of my Sermon: namely, that all those are greatly deceiued, and doe fall into most certen destruction, who, whether they consider the worlde it selfe,

aboue and beneath, or themſelues within and without, or whatſoeuer is done in the world, doe hope to finde in worldly matters, any thing ſo ſure & ſteadie, as that hauing atteyned it, they may thinke themſelues well, and be arreſt. For I do eftſoones affirme to the contrarie, that there is no worldly thing in the worlde, which is not inconſtant, flitting, vaniſhing, & euen moſt vaine vanitie. Whereupon it followeth, that all their endeuors are vaine, who frō ſuch vaine things doe looke for any ſteadfaſtneſſe, much leſſe for any thing that may laſt for euer.

Verſ. 3. *What hath a man left of all his labour wherein hee trauaileth vnder the Sunne?*

And becauſe I ſee that all men, or at leaſt the moſt parte, will riſe vp againſt me, as being of a contrary iudgement, as appeareth by their indeuours and matters: firſt, I aſke this queſtion, not of thoſe that are ſlouthfull and doe nothing, but idlely gaze vpon this world, who are not worthie ſomuch as to be called men: but, of thoſe wiſe men, who by manifold cares, and much toyle both of ſoule and bodie, dreamed that they might atteine that reſt, which ſo deſirouſly they ſought after: whether any of them by their trauailes hath gotten any thing, which eyther in it ſelfe, or in them that atteyned it, was of any continuance, or long reſted & remained with them. Surely, whitherſoeuer they turne their eies or their mindes, they muſt needes confeſſe they were able to compaſſe no ſuch matter.

Verſ. 4. (One) *generation paſſeth, and* (an other) *generation ſucceedeth, but the earth abideth for euer.*

For firſt, if we conſider the partes of the whole worlde, among which, man paſſeth all the reſt, not only ſeuerall men one by one, but whole houſholdes, people & nations depart out of this life, and others come in their roome, & they alſo in their time goe their wayes: ſo that the earth may be compared to a ſtage, wherein one player commeth in after another, and being it ſelfe conſtant and ſtanding faſt, doeth caſt in their teeth their tranſitorie eſtate, that abideth but for a moment. And if, by reaſon that men themſelues doe dye, their life be ſo vncerten and ſo flitting, what greater follie is there then theirs, who imagine they can finde any thing

ſteadfaſt

ſteadfaſt and of continuance, wherein to reſte, eyther in themſelues, or in other, and eyther in this life, or in thoſe thinges wherein this life ſtandeth?

Verſ. 5. And the Sunne riſeth, and the Sunne goeth downe, and bloweth with trauailing till hee come to his place where hee riſeth.

And not only ſo, but euen the other partes of the worlde, albeit they die not as wee doe, for whoſe ſakes they were created: yet euen in their nature doe declare a reſtleſſe chaunge, and doe ſing vnto vs as it were with a loude voice, that wee muſt ſeeke for reſt in ſome other thing, and not in them.

Let the Sunne, that ſtandeth in the tower of the heauens, as it were a King or an Emperour, bee a witneſſe hereof, and preach it vnto vs. For albeit, after ſo many ages, it continue in it ſelfe, as it was created from the beginning, and being of an vnſpeakeable ſtrength, hath runne ouer and finiſhed ſo many races, yet hath it not reſted, neyther doth reſt in any place, no not for a moment: it neuer ſtoode ſtill in any place, nor doth ſtand ſtill: but fetching a compaſſe, euery day riſeth and ſetteth, carrying with it the intercourſe of dayes and nightes, and returning againe from whence it came, that it may from thence beginne his courſe againe. Then, what peace can that bring vnto vs, which herein onely is conſtant and like it ſelfe, that it ſtandeth not ſtill in any place?

Verſ. 6. The winde goeth to the South, and fetcheth a compaſſe about to the North, it runneth about, and paſſeth to this place and to that, and the winde commeth backe againe to all the places, by which it hath gone about.

But if wee come lower, to the partes that are neereſt vnto vs, what is more vnſtable then this verie aire, which is caſt ouer vs rounde about, where the windes raigne, and toſſe vp and downe all that ſpace, nowe ruſhing towarde the South, and anon hauing verie ſwiftely gonne about the earth, blowe very fiercely from the North, leauing there, where they beganne, and beginning there, where they left?

Verſ. 7. All

Verſ. 7. All the riuers goe into the Sea, and yet the Sea is not filled: whither the riuers goe, from thence they returne, that they may goe thither againe.

But let vs yet looke to thinges more neere, and let vs beholde a true picture of this vnſtableneſſe, which offereth it ſelfe vnto our eies: I meane the ſprings, riuers, and ſtreames that water the earth. Surely, they all runne amayne into the ſea, and are neuer wearie with running: ſet dammes in the way, deuide the greater waters into manie ſtreams, they muſt needes haue their courſe. And whither runne they? ſurely into that huge gulfe of waters, which they call the Sea. But the ſea, to ſay nothing of the vnquiet beating of it againſt the ſhoare, and recoiling backe againe from the ſhoare, and the waues and billowes thereof daſhing one againſt another, if, as it increaſed by the running in of ſo many ſtreames, it had continued in that fulneſſe whereunto it was ſwolne, it had long ere this ouerflowed & drowned all partes of the earth. But the caſe ſtandeth farre otherwiſe. For all the waters that the Sea receiueth by the ſtreames that run into it, it caſteth out againe, by chanels and pipes vnder the earth: otherwiſe the verie riuers would be dried vp: ſo that neither the Sea, by taking them in and ſending them out, nor the riuers by ſpeeding thither and againe returning from thence, doe reſt or ſtay any where.

Verſ. 8. All thinges are without reſt, (which) no man can atteine vnto: neyther is the eye ſatiſſied with beholding them, nor the eare filled with hearing of them.

So it is, that no ſtayed and conſtant thing can be founde in this whole nature of thinges, which wee call the worlde, where in al things are toſſed to and fro, in continual motion: in the ſtudie whereof, which cannot be eyther by vnderſtanding comprehended, or by woordes expreſſed, though you wearie your ſelfe neuer ſo much, you ſhall neuer ſatiſfie your curioſitie. For the more you ſee and heare, the more you will be deſirous to ſee and to heare.

Verſ. 9. That which hath bene, (is) euen the verie ſame that ſhall be: and that which hath bene done, (is) euen the verie ſame that ſhall be done, neither is there any newe thing vnder the Sunne.

And

And nowe I am verie desirous to talke with the most diligent searchers of the matters of this worlde. I pray you tell me, what newe thing is here? What, thinke you you haue found, or shall finde that is but lately risen vp? Surely I say, that the same thing is and shall be, that hath bene before, & that there shall not bee any thing, but that hath beene done before. Finally, there is no newe thing to bee founde vnder the Sunne.

Vers. 10. *Is there any thing, whereof (a man) may say, Behold, this is newe? it hath bene already in the ages that were before vs.*

And yet I am not ignorant, that manie things seeme new to many men: to them I say, they seeme newe, but in themselues they are not so: for the things were long agoe in times past, but they had not founde them out before.

Vers. 11. *There is no memorie of the former things, neyther shall there bee any remembraunce of the latter that shall bee with them that shall come after.*

For this is the state of all worldly thinges. Time it selfe consumeth all things. Shortnesse of life, and partly mans weakenesse, partly negligence, finally a thousande wayes whereby whole nations are vtterly destroyed, make the remembrance of things past quickly to decay, and such things as are nowe done in the worlde, are likewise of all posteritie buried in forgetfulnesse.

Vers. 12. *I the Preacher, King ouer Israel in Ierusalem.*

And I doe not speake vnto you vnaduisedly, and of matters that either I know not, or haue receiued onely by hearesay. I an Israelite speake vnto you Israelites, I your King sitting in Ierusalem as in the throne of veritie, speake vnto you my subiectes. I haue wanted no authoritie to inquire, nor abilitie or opportunitie to knowe, and indeede to take triall of all worldly things.

Vers. 13. *I haue giuen my minde wisely to search and finde out whatsoeuer is done vnder heauen, which sore trauaile God hath laid vpon men to afflict them selues withall.*

And my will hath not bene behinde my opportunitie and abilitie. For no man hath euer searched more carefully, no man did euer more earnestly bend his whole minde to finde out the causes and effectes of all thinges that are, or come

to passe vnder heauen then I haue done. For this is the thing wherin men neyther obserue any meane, nor make any end, nor take any good course, in that they make serch for al matters, I cannot say so diligently & exactly as curiously & inquisitiuely, neyther yet so profitablie, as vainegloriously: not referring all that their painefull trauaile in finding out matters to the glorie of God, but to vanitie, to foolishnes, to pleasures, last of all to vngodlinesse: vnlesse, (as hereafter wee shall haue occasion to shewe) they be guided by some other manner of Spirite, then by the Spirite of man. And this falleth out by the iust iudgement of God, who by this meanes taketh vengeance of the prophane boldnes of mans witte, which they haue receiued euen from that first parent of mankind.

Vers. 14. *I haue therefore perceiued all things that are done vnder the Sunne, they are all vanitie, and feede a man with wind, (or) are a vexation of minde.*

Beeing therefore thus inflamed with desire, and hauing diligentlie searched throughout the whole worlde in all places where the Sunne shineth vpon the earth; I haue found that all this great paines is taken in vaine, and I haue had no better reward for my labour, then the vnquiet and vnprofitable wearying of my minde, feeding it selfe as it were with wind.

Vers. 15. *That which is crooked cannot be made streight, and that which is wanting can not be numbred.*

For if we consider the things them selues, the very state of the whole worlde and all the partes thereof (as nowe it standeth since mans fall) and all the effects that follow therof, doe testifie so great a confusion and corruption, that whosoeuer shall spende him selfe in searching after them shall reape nothing thereby, but most toilesome trouble; especiallie for that no man is any more able to bring that confusion into order, or to reforme that corruption, then to restore all things to the perfite integritie of their nature.

Vers. 16. *Then I spake in my heart and saide, behold I haue enlarged and increased wisdome about all that went before me in Ierusalem, and my heart hath seene much wisdome and knowledge.*

And

And leaſt any man may happily thinke, that in deede I haue gone about it, but eyther for want of witte, or by fault of negligence haue not attayned vnto it, I may truly witneſſe this of my ſelfe without arrogancie, that I haue gone ſo farre, that as well in wiſdome and knowledge of all the ſecretes of nature, as in power, I haue farre excelled all thoſe though very ſpeciall men, that euer were in Ieruſalem which is the ſanctuarie of wiſdome.

Verſ. 17. *And when I applyed my heart to vnderſtand wiſedome and knowledge, & madneſſe and follie, I learned that this alſo is as wind to feed a man withall, or a vexation of minde.*

Beeing therefore thus prepared to get this knowledge, I thoroughly learned, whatſoeuer mans witte can reach vnto in the whole nature of things, not excepting thoſe wherein men ſwaruing from the truth, and beeing together by the eares about contrarie opinions doe bewray not onely their ignorance, but euen their folly and manyfold madneſſe. And now hauing gone thorough all, I profeſſe againe that I haue gotten nothing elſe therby but a penſiue wearſomeneſſe of my minde, feeding it ſelfe with this moſt vaine ſearch as it were with wind.

Verſ. 18. *Becauſe in much wiſdome, (there is) much griefe, and he that increaſeth in knowledge, increaſeth ſorow.*

And by this diligent ſearch, euen the moſt ſharpe witted man is ſo farre from finding any thing that may content him, that contrariwiſe the further he goeth in this wiſdome, the more he is offended: and the more he hath learned, the more he is tormented, partly becauſe he is ſtill ignorant of very many things, partly becauſe he hath a very vncertaine knowledge of thoſe things he hath learned.

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 1. *I ſaide within my ſelfe, or to my ſelfe, I will proue the with ioy, therefore looke vpon good things,* that is, drink merily, and take thy pleaſure in pleaſant things: *and behold this is alſo vanitie.*

Beeing

BEeing disapointd of this hope, thus I began to say within my selfe: Because ths toyling kind of life hath mocked & deceiued thee, goe now the contrarie way to worke: Rather pamper thy bellie, and souse thy selfe altogether in pleasure, and whatsoeuer may delight thee, take the fill of it. But here also I haue gotten nothing, but a most vaine vanitie. For what stedfastnes at all can a man finde in those things that consume & spend in the very vsing of them? and how can those things satisfie the minde, which beeing measurablie taken susteyne the bodie but for a smal time; and beeing taken immoderately, are a most certen bane both of minde and bodie?

Vers. 2 Of laughter I haue said, it is mad, and of ioy, what is this that it worketh?

Wherefore I chaunged my minde, and abhorring laughter, Hence from me, said I, thou meere madnesse, and being out of loue with pleasures, I said, what haue I to do with thee thou flattering delight?

Vers. 3 I tooke counsell, (or) hauing aduised, I determined to draw flesh to wine, that is, to fare deliciouslie, and *(yet for all that) to acquaint my hart to wisdome, and so lay holde of follie,* (that is, to marke, what offence is herein committed,) *untill I might see, what were requisite for men to doe vnder heauen the whol number of the daies of their life.*

Then turning from hence, after I had considered diligentlie and often, what way it were best to take, seeing neither of the former would prooue, I determined I could not doe better, then to liue daintily and sumptuouslie, as especially it becommeth a King, yet not dissolutely and exessiuely, but so as being not out of reason: & learning euen by this very moderation, wherein fooliſh men doe offend not knowing how to keepe a measure in this sumptuousnesse, I might at the length indeede vnderstand, what kind of life it were, wherein a man passing the course of this life, might worthelie seeme a blessed man.

Verſ. 4 I made me goodlie workes, I builded me houſes, I planted me vineyardes.

Betaking my ſelfe therefore to great ſtate, and to ſet out my life with all faire ſhewes and with aboundance, I ſpared no coſt in building moſt ſtately houſes, and in planting moſt pleaſant orchardes and gardens.

Verſ. 5 I made me orchardes and gardens, and I planted in them trees of all fruits.

I dreſſed me vp moſt goodlie plots, and planted in them trees of all kindes.

Verſ. 6 I made me pondes of water, to water therewith the wood that brought forth trees.

I built from the ground moſt cleere ponds full of water, that the woods lying vnder them (a moſt pleaſant ſight for the eyes to behold) might be watered by them.

Verſ. 7 I got me ſeruants and maides and had children borne in the houſe, alſo I had great poſſeſſion of beenes and of ſheepe aboue all that were before me in Ieruſalem.

In ſeruants alſo, as well bought with money, as borne in the houſe, and all things belonging to the ſeruice of a king: in flockes alſo and heardes, there was neuer any in Ieruſalem richer then I.

Verſ. 8 I gathered me heapes of ſiluer & gold, & the chiefe treaſure of Kings and prouinces, and I prouided me men ſingers and women ſingers, and the delights of the ſonnes of men, a conſort, and conſorts, that is, all kindes of muſicall inſtruments.

I heaped vp together gold and ſiluer and euery pretious thing that kings and princes doe lay vp in ſtore, and I was not without men ſingers and women minſtrels, and ſuch like things wherewith mens eares are delighted, beſides greate ſtore of muſicall inſtruments.

Verſ. 9 And I became great, and increaſed aboue all that were before me in Ieruſalem: moreouer my wiſdome remained with me.

Therefore I became great and increaſed ſo mightily, that of all that liued before me in Ieruſalem, there was none to be compared with me: and all this while in ſo great glorie, and ſo great aboundance of all things, I did not in any thing depart from the durie of a wiſe king.

Verſ. 10 And whatſoeuer mine eyes deſired, I withheld it not from them,

them, nor did withdrawe my heart from any ioy: for my heart reioyced in all my labours, and this was my portion of all my trauaile.

I hid nothing out of my sight that pleased mine eies: I abstained from nothing wherewith my minde might be cheared: and I was able to followe and doe all these thinges, not onely with no griefe, but also with great pleasure, and I had no other fruite of this my labour, but pleasure for the time I enioyed them.

Vers. 11. *And I looked backe vpon all my workes that my handes had wrought, and the trauaile that I had laboured to bring to passe, and behold all these things are vanitie, and feede me with wind, (or, are a vexation of mind,) neither is there any thing left vnder the Sunne.*

For I turned my minde to those so many and so statelie workes, in the only building whereof I had bestowed a great deale of verie pleasant I confesse, but verie painefull labour of minde and bodie, to see if these thinges would put me in hope of any stedfast and sounde matter, and such as were worthie indeede for my minde to staie it selfe vpon: beholde, in this my expectation also, beeing of my selfe foulie deceiued, I founde by experience that all these things, seeme they neuer so goodlie, are meere vanitie, wherewith a mans minde coulde be no better satisfied, then if he had taken his fill of winde: and indeede that there is no worldly thing vnder the Sunne, whether you respect men themselues propounding to themselues some one thing, some another, or the verie thinges which either themselues deuise, or the worlde offereth vnto them, that is of a stedfast and abiding nature. And in these so transitorie thinges, howe can a man looke for anie true and sounde quietnesse of minde, wherewith he may haue good cause to be content.

Vers. 12. *And I looked backe to see*, that is, to consider, *wisdome: for what is any man to come after the King in that which nowe is done?* that is, for what is there in anie priuate man, whereupon he may presume to match himselfe with the King thus going before him, to knowe the things that haue bene done before time?

Vers. 13. *And I sawe that wisedome is better then follie, as light is better then darkenes.*

And

And yet let no man for this thinke me to be madde, as if I did therefore make no difference betweene wisedome, and either madnesse or follie, which is the meane betwene them both: (and what private man can hope to come neere the King in searching out what hath happened in former ages?) I say, that in this so diuers and vncertaine tossing of my minde to and fro, I haue found this; that wisedome goeth as farre beyond follie, as light beyond darkenesse.

Vers. 14. *For the wise mans eyes are in his head: but a foole walketh in darkenesse; but I haue also learned that the same ende befalleth to them all.*

For wise men are truely sighted, so beholding things present with the eyes of the head, that they consider them also with the eyes of the minde, and doe also prouidently foresee things to come: but fooles can see no better at mid day then blind men. But (which is most miserable of all) I haue marked, that all this wisedome of the world can no way hinder, but that both of them must be subiect to the common inconveniences and calamities of mans life.

Vers. 15. *Therefore I saide with my selfe, as it falleth to the foole, so will it fall to me: to what end then should I be more wise? Therefore I said with my selfe this is also vanitie.*

Which if it be so that by no wisdome of man I can avoide, but that at length my condition must be al one with the most foole, what good wil it then do me to haue taken such paines to be wiser then he? Therfore vpon good reason I set it down with my selfe, that this also is a flitting and transitory thing.

Vers. 16. *For there shall be no remembrance of the wise man with the foole*, that is, there shalbe no mention, neither of the wise man nor of the foole in time to come: *because in the daies that follow all things shall be forgotten, and how dyeth the wise man with the foole?* that is, no otherwise dieth the wise man then the foole.

For in that things to come will by continuance of time be blotted out, surely the memorie neither of the wise, nor of the foolish that are departed can last long. And what a thing is this, that the wise man dyeth as well as the foole.

Vers. 17. *Therefore I hated life it selfe: because it is euill*, that is, displeaseth me, *whatsoeuer is done vnder the sunne: for all*

things

thinges are vanitie, and feede a man with winde, or are a vexation of minde.

Therefore the verie life of men was yrkesome vnto me when I considered these thinges: and whatsoeuer men doe vnder the Sunne did greatly displease me, because all things are vaine, wherewith men feede them selues as it were with winde.

Vers. 18. *I hated also my labour, wherein I trauailed vnder the sunne, because I shall leaue it to the man that shall come after me.*

Moreouer for another cause also I began to hate all that paines I had taken, though otherwise not greatly troublesome vnto me, and which I had bestowed in getting store of riches together, because at the length I must forgo them and leaue them to mine heire.

Vers. 19. *And who knoweth whether he shall be wise or not? yet shall he be Lord of all my labour wherein I haue trauailed, and wherein I haue bene wise vnder the Sunne: This also is vanitie.*

For can any man tell whether he shall be a wise man or a foole? But whatsoeuer he shall be, he must be Lord of them all, which he will abuse at his pleasure: And if it fall out that he be a foole, then for a foole haue I spent my life in heaping so many goods together, and in vaine shall I be founde to haue established my kingdome so carefully with good lawes, which he by his folly shall bring to nothing. And though he be a wise mã, yet will he not haue the same liking of all that I haue built, or set in order, but that which I haue built square, he will alter into round: to conclude, he will order all things both priuate and publike, not as I haue done, but according to his newe deuice. And therefore herein apeareth a wonderfull kinde of vanitie.

Vers. 20. *And I turned,* (that is, in thinking I came to this point,) *that I was vtterly discouraged in all my labour, wherein I had laboured vnder the Sunne.*

Therefore hauing caryed my mind to and fro euery way, and cast all accounts, calling my selfe home againe, I determined at once to giue ouer and cast away all my pensiue care and thought, wherewith I hauing liued so long had wearied my selfe.

Vers. 21.

Verſ. 21. *For there is a man, whoſe trauaile hath bene with wiſedome, and knowledge, and equitie:* (that is, it is not hard to finde ſuch a man, as by labouring wiſely, skilfully, and vprightly hath gotten him ſelfe riches:) *yet to a man that hath not trauailed therein, ſhall he leaue it for his portion. This is alſo vanitie, and a great euill.*

For, as I ſaid euen nowe, let a man vſe neuer ſo great wiſedome, skill, and vprightneſſe of minde in looking to his affaires, it falleth out for the moſt part, that ſuch thinges as he hath ordered and gotten with care, he leaueth to them to poſſeſſe, who wagged not ſo much as one finger toward the getting of them; which truely is a very great vanitie and extreeme miſerie.

Verſ. 22. *For what hath man,* (that is, what is there left vnto man,) *of all labour, & thought of heart, wherein he hath trauailed vnder the Sunne.*

For hath a man when he dyeth, any of all thoſe things remaining with him, in getting or keeping whereof he did by taking ſo great care, weary his bodie and minde all that long time, wherein he might haue taken pleaſure in enioying the vſe of his life?

Verſ. 23. *For all his dayes are ſorrowes, and his care taking griefe of minde, and his heart reſteth not, no not in the night. This is vanitie.*

The vſe, I ſay, of this light and life, whereof he had ſcarce any one moment voide of ſorrowes: wherein being occupied about endleſſe buſineſſe, he was neuer free from greeuances of mind, and paſſed not ouer ſo much as the very nights, wherein other liuing creatures take their reſt, without continuall vnquietneſſe, which is an eſpeciall proofe of mans vanitie.

Verſ. 24. *Is not this then good for man,* (that is, is it not the onely commoditie comming to man of his great labour) *to eate and to drinke, and to ſhewe his ſoule the good that commeth of his labour,* that is, cheerefully to enioy the goods gotten by his labour as long as life laſteth: *which alſo I ſawe was of the hande of God him ſelfe:* that is, I found by experience to proceede from the liberalitie of God him ſelfe, and that man can not giue it vnto him ſelfe.

What

What ſhall a man ſay then? Shall we caſt away this life, or ſpend it in continuall mourning, as if this worlde were made either for no profitable vſe, or euen for mans deſtruction? God forbid: for although we haue alreadie prooued that man can finde nothing, for the attaining whereof hee may worthily be tearmed a bleſſed man, neither in any part of this worlde, nor in him ſelfe, nor in thoſe thinges, which either mans wit can finde out, or his wiſedome performe, and ſet in order (for of thinges in themſelues wicked, it was not needefull to ſpeake, the vſe and yſſue whereof cannot otherwiſe be but alwayes vnhappie) yet it followeth not thereof, that of all thoſe things, which for mans ſake were created, there is nothing to be found, which may helpe a man to order his life wiſely, diſcreetly, honeſtly and well: What good then is to bee gotten by them? namely, (to ſpeake firſt of thoſe things which are requiſite for the maintenance of this preſent life) to looke for no other thing from them, then that, for which they were created, and to thee, whatſoeuer thou art, granted by God in that meaſure, that ſeemed good vnto him. Now, they were not made for this ende, that thou ſhouldeſt depend vpon them, or reſt in them, which we haue ſhewed to be ſo inconſtant, neyther yet to hoorde them vp ſo as they ſhall doe no good, neyther to thy ſelfe, nor to any other: nor to waſt them riotouſly, as if they would not ſpend faſt ynough of themſelues: but to the ende, that according to thy place and calling thou ſhouldeſt with a caulme and a quiet minde, and being content with that thou haſt gotten by thine honeſt labour, ſhouldeſt ſo paſſe this life. And if beſides this vſe, thou looke for any other thing from them, thou art greatly deceiued, foraſmuch as in the verie right vſe of them, they ſpend & waſte away. But moreouer remember this, that neither by chaunce, nor by help of the ſelfe ſame thinges thou haſt atteined them, either by gift from anie other, or by meanes of thine owne labour, or that thy life is ſuſtayned by them: but that of the ſpeciall bountie of God, thou haſt receiued them, to whome for that cauſe thou art bound to giue thanks for all, and of whome onelie thou canſt obteine to enioy them quietly and contentedly.

Verſ. 25. *For who could eate or feele*, that is, ſatisfie the bodie

bodie & feed the ſenſes with thoſe good and pleaſant things, *outwardly, more then I?* that is, more eaſily and aboundantly then I?

But I pray you beleeue me, who haue moſt of all, and moſt eaſilie tryed what is in them. For if there could any other commoditie redound to men of thoſe things, that are waſted in the very vſe of them, could any man take better triall of it then I, who haue wanted nothing to ſatisfie mine appetite and deſire?

Verſ. 26. For vnto a man that is good in his ſight, God giueth knowledge, and wiſdome, and gladnes: but vnto the ſinner he giueth penſiue careſulneſſe, to gather together and to heape vp, to leaue vnto him that will be good before God, that is, that all that he hath gathered may come to his lot, vpon whom it ſhall pleaſe God to beſtow it: *This is alſo vanitie, and feedeth a man with wind, or is a vexation of mind.*

But the thing I ſpake laſt of, is farre the greateſt, and euery way the principall: namely, ſet it downe with your ſelues for a ſure truth, that the skill and grace to vſe all theſe things wel, proceedeth from none other, but from the ſpecial bountie of God, who vnto men that referre his gracious gifts to the holie ſeruice of him ſelfe, giueth both that wiſdome and knowledge of matters which a man muſt needs haue before he come to the practiſe of life, and diſcretion whereby men may put in execution as they ought ſuch things as they haue wiſely deuiſed, finally that ſtaied and contented minde which is altogether needefull for them, that they be not eyther puffed vp with proſperitie, or daunted with aduerſitie. But when men againſt their owne conſcience, and alſo againſt Gods warnings, and that among vs that are the people of God, doe liue ſhamefully, the ſame God beeing a iuſt iudge, putteth in their hartes miſerably to torment themſelues in gathering together and heaping vp thoſe things, which afterward the ſame God at his owne pleaſure taketh away and giueth to whome he will, ſo that in their moſt toyling life, wherunto they put them ſelues, there is no leſſe vanitie to be ſeene, then if a man did dreame he could be ſatisfied with drawing in wind.

CHAPTER III.

VERSE 1. *To euery thing there is an appointed time, and there is a fitte ſeaſon for euery deſire,* that is, for all things which men are carefull to atteine, *vnder heauen.*

BVT go too: let vs proceede to that almoſt infinite variety and contrariety of things wherein this reſtleſſe life is occupied: whereof ſome God hath bound by the lawes of nature, others men voluntarily take in hand to performe by cunning and induſtry, others the neceſſitie of this life draweth on. Now for the beginning and accompliſhing of euery one of them Gods prouidence hath appointed a fit and conuenient ſeaſon, whereof dependeth the good ſucceſſe of thé all, and which he moſt freely ruleth and ordereth at his owne pleaſure, but no mortall man is able either to ſtay, or to haſten forward.

Verſ. 2. *There is a fitte time to be borne, and a fitte time to die, a fitte time to plant, and a fitte time to plucke vp that which was planted.*

And to ſpeake firſt both of the beginning and ending of this tranſitorie life, meaning to come to other things afterward that come betweene them both: neither by being born can men enter the race thereof, nor by dying come to the goale, but at ſuch ſet times and ſeaſons as God hath before appointed: whether they come to be borne or to dye, either according to the lawes of nature, or againſt the order of nature. Neyther onely in mans byrth and death is this to be ſeene, but almoſt infinite diuerſities of plants created for the vſe of mans life, haue their appointed time, wherin to be plãted & to grow, and wherin to be plucked vp, either after they are waxen ripe and come to their age, or in the meane time as neceſſitie requireth.

Verſ. 3. *There is a fitte time to kill, and a fitte time to make whole: a fitte time to pull downe and a fitte time to build.*

And not onely natural life and death haue their appointed ſeaſon, but there is alſo a time limited, wherein not without the manifold and vnſpeakeable counſell of God life is cut off, either by a thouſand deadly miſchiefs falling out by chance,

chance, or by outward force and violence. And contrariwise men escape from daungers lighting vpon them by some other occasion, and recouer of very many diseases of all sorts. And during this life, either necessitie so requiring and mans will so seruing, buildings are sometimes reared vp, sometime pulled downe, the bringing whereof to passe dependeth vpon some fitte and seasonable opportunities, which are not within the power and discretion of man.

Vers. 4. There is a fitte time to weepe, and a fit time to mourne, and a fitte time to daunce.

And howsoeuer mē study to auoid al troubles, yet notwithstanding they can neyther auoid the causes of weeping, but many times are compelled to lament against their wils, neyther can they reioyce at any other time, then when it pleaseth God.

Vers. 5. There is a fitte time to scatter stones, and a fitte time to gather stones; a fitte time to imbrace, and a fitte time to be farre from imbracing.

And if any man haue determined either to pul down houses, or to gather stones for the building of them, he must wayt for a fitte season, which hangeth vpon many circumstances. Doest thou purpose to marrie a wife, or to haue a childe by thy wife? here is a fitte and appointed season, which somtime thou art eyther compelled to obey against thy will, or if thou resist it, thou bringest some great mischiefe vpon thy selfe.

Vers. 6. There is a fitte time to seeke and a fitte time to loose, a fitte time to keepe, and a fitte time to cast away.

Doest thou vse marchandise, or doest thou occupie any craft or trade to get thy liuing by, thou must marke and that diligentlie the time wherein thy gaine is to be gotten, & yet looke to thy self as skilfully & as diligently as thou canst, thou shalt find there is some time, wherin thou must euen be faine to suffer losse. Moreouer very experience shall teach thee, that there is a seasonable and fitte time appointed not onely for sparing, which alone most men studie for, but also wherein thou must be content willingly to suffer losse, and of thine owne accord with gainefull dammage to cast away that thou hast gotten with long labour.

Vers. 7. There is a fitte time to rent, and a fitte time to sow, a fitte

time to keepe ſilence and a fitte time to ſpeake.

Yea the very garments wherewith we are clothed at fitte and ſeaſonable time are ſowed, or rent in ſunder: and ſpeech it ſelfe whereof there is ſo neceſſary & ſo large vſe, is not at euery time either to be put forth or kept in: which he that doth not moſt diligently obſerue, as he doeth depriue him ſelfe of infinite commodities, ſo doth he lay him ſelfe open to very many calamities.

Verſ. 8. *There is a fitte time to loue and a fitte time to hate: a fitte time for warre, and a fitte time for peace.*

Finallie, whereas mankind is tyed and bound together by the right vſe of true friendſhip, both in louing and keeping friendes, and alſo in the vſe of them, there is wonderfull much in fitte times and ſeaſons. And there is no leſſe force in the contrarie, that is, in diſcerning our enemies, and either in ſetting vpon them, or taking heed of thē, & alſo in turning to our own vſe & benefite ſuch iniuries & diſcommodities as are like to befall vs. For what order ſo euer men take with thē ſelues & with al that they haue, ſometime concord, ſometime diſcord chaungeth & altereth al priuate matters; ſometime peace, ſometime warre turneth vpſide down the courſe of all mens affaires generallie.

Verſ. 9. *What then is there left and remaining to come to him that laboureth, of all that, wherein he trauaileth.*

Which beeing ſo, what certen or laſting thing is there, which any man can hope to attaine by all the paines he is able to take?

Verſ. 10. *I haue ſeene the diſtracting care which God hath giuen to men to vexe them withall.*

And I doe not ſpeake this raſhly, but hauing diligentlie conſidered and weighed infinite matters full of buſines and care, beeing aboue the capacitie of men and nothing belonging to them; wherewith (God ſo taking vengeance of them) mortall men doe torment them ſelues, whereas they ought rather to ſubmit them ſelues to the prouidence of god and whollie to yeeld them ſelues to be ruled thereby.

Verſ. 11. *God made all things beawtifull in their fitte ſeaſon yea he hath euen ſet the world in their harts*, to wit, in mens harts: that is, he hath brought to paſſe by his iuſt iudgement, that

men

men thinke they haue as it were the world it ſelfe and the gouernement thereof in their boſome; *beſide that*, that is, hauing no regard that, *no man findeth*, that is, atteineth vnto *the worke that God hath made from the beginning to the end.*

For God the moſt wiſe and mightie Creator and gouernour of all things, as he created all things in a moſt beawtifull order, and appointed fitte and conuenient times for euery thing that was to be, wherein no want or defect at all can be found: ſo beeing highly diſpleaſed with mans proud curioſitie and impatiencie, he plagued their mindes with this doting perſwaſion, that they dreame they are able to perceiue and gouerne that perpetuall courſe of times running downe thoroughout all ages, which notwithſtanding they come ſo ſhort of, that (poore men) they are not able by any ſtudie or ſearch to comprehend, or reach vnto, not ſo much as one worke of Gods prouidence, in al points as the ſame is begun and brought to perfection.

Verſ. 12. *Therefore I knew that there is no better thing for men, then to reioyce, and to enioy their goods in their life.*

Therefore whoſoeuer is wiſe, let him ceaſe to follow the example of fooliſh men, thus tormenting them ſelues with vnaduiſed and vaine ſearching vp and downe; and rather with a contented and quiet minde let him take his pleaſure in the preſent goods that God hath graunted vnto him.

Verſ. 13. *But euen that a man eateth and drinketh, and ſeeth good*, that is, receiueth fruit of his labour, *it is the gift of God.*

And yet let no man think that he is able to giue vnto him ſelfe either the vſe of theſe commodities, or this contentednesſe of mind. For as the ſelfe things, ſo this alſo is graunted of the ſpeciall gift and bountie of God, that a man hauing diſcharged the dueties of his calling is able to enioy and to take pleaſure in the vſe of this light, and in thoſe things that are prouided for the nouriſhing of the bodie; and therefore aſwell ought we to pray vnto him, and looke to receiue from him alone all theſe things, as when we haue obtained them giue thanks to him for them, and vſe them according to the rule of his will.

Verſ. 14. *I know that what God doeth ſhall alwaies be*, that is, whatſoeuer God hath appointed ſhalbe, ſhall alwaies neceſ-

ſarilie be, *neither can any thing be added to it, nor taken from it. And God ſo dealeth that men may be afraid of his preſence.*

And ſurely for a man to think, that theſe things are otherwiſe, and that we haue in our owne handes the cauſes of things, or the ſucceſſe of our owne purpoſes, & for vs to torment our ſelues, if all things fall not out according to our mindes, what is it elſe but meere madnes? For whatſoeuer mẽ purpoſe, diſcuſſe, determine, & take in hand, yet ſhal that alwaies ſtand whatſoeuer God hath determined ſhould be done in times paſt, or ſhalbe done in time to come. Whoſe vnchangeable will, it were verie vnaduiſed and euen wicked to thinke, that any thing might or ought to bee added vnto, or taken from. For God at his owne pleaſure, though not alwayes to bee diſcerned of vs, yet alwayes iuſt ruleth and guideth all thinges, to compell men euen againſt their wils to appeare before him, and to reuerence his Maieſtie.

Verſ. 15. *That which hath bene, nowe is, and that which ſhall be, hath bene alreadie, and which is driuen paſt, will God require, namely, to bring it backe againe.*

Hereof it is, that by reaſon he alone doth conſtantly gouerne the chaunges and courſe of times, howeſoeuer they ſeeme inconſtant vnto vs, ſuddeinly that commeth againe which was paſt, and that which ſhall be hereafter, hath bene alreadie. For Gods hand ſo guideth this wheeling courſe, that that, which in the running of the wheele, is nowe gone paſt vs, ſhall in time, hauing fetched his compaſſe, come into place againe.

Verſ. 19. *Beſides, I ſaw vnder the Sun, the place of iudgment, there was iniquitie, & the place of Iuſtice, there was wickedneſſe.*

Moreouer, as I haue generally ſhewed, what, and howe great the vanitie of mans wiſedome and ſkill is: ſo nowe I meane to lay open particularly, verie many thinges that I haue diligently marked in the courſe of this life, whereby all men may more and more vnderſtand, howe farre they are deceiued, that ſeeke for contentment in any worldly thing.

Firſt therefore, when I conſider the conuerſation that men haue one with another, this commeth to my minde, as a moſt miſerable thing, that whereas there fall out among thẽ controuerſies without number, for the deciding wherof, there

there are good lawes made, and magiſtrates ordeined, yet ſo farre off is it, that by this meanes euery man commeth to his own right, that contrariwiſe, iniurie is in no place more born out: as if all iniuſtice were armed with publique authoritie.

Verſ. 17. *I ſaide to my ſelfe, God will iudge the righteous and the wicked, becauſe there is a ſeaſonable time for euery purpoſe and for euery worke appointed there*, that is, with God the Iudge.

And now I pray you tell me, what remedie in this caſe can you finde among men themſelues? Surely none at all, whitherſoeuer you looke, foraſmuch as they are armed with publique authoritie, who breake all lawes without controulment. Therefore we muſt appeale vnto God alone, that wil be a iuſt auenger and deliuerer of the guiltleſſe man that is oppreſſed. But when ſhall this be? Let no man here diſquiet himſelfe in vaine, but flying thither, that is, to Gods iudgement ſeate, with a quiet minde, let him waite for time of giuing iudgement. For euen there is that certaine and appointed time, wherein, euery one, both iuſt and vniuſt, ſtanding before his iudgment ſeate, he will giue righteous iudgement, euen of the thoughtes of men, much more will he aſke an account of ſuch thinges as they haue done, well or ill.

Verſ. 18. *And I ſaide in my heart vpon the ſtate of men*, that is, looking to nothing elſe, but the preſent ſtate of men, ſo farre as mans reaſon can conſider of it, God hath ſo made them, *to aſſure them and to ſhew them that they are beaſtes*.

And, if we doe not accompt this for a certaine and vndoubted truth, neither looke any higher then to thoſe things that offer themſelues to our ſenſes, what elſe can we eſteme of men themſelues and their eſtate but that as it were by the voyce of God himſelfe it is cleerely and plainly ſhewed, that there is no better account to be made of men thē of beaſts?

Verſ. 19. *For the ende of a man is the ende of a beaſt, they haue I ſay, all one end: as is the carkaſe of the one, ſo is the carkaſe of the other, and this man hath no excellencie aboue that beaſt. For all thinges are vanitie*: that is to ſay, both the one and the other come to corruption.

For outwardly there appeareth the ſame ende of men and beaſts, both of thē giuing vp the Ghoſt after one ſort, as alſo they breath after one ſort: and after death neither men nor

beastes haue any of those thinges left, which are necessary for maintenance of this life: but as well from the one as the other, all these worldly thinges vanishe away at their death.

Vers. 20. *All this goeth to one place, all this came from dust, and to dust shall returne.*

For both men and beastes goe to one place, to wit, to dust, from whence they were both taken.

Vers. 21. *Who knoweth*, that is, although it bee so, as afterward it followeth. *chap* 12. 9, yet what man among a thousand knoweth it, and by what reason of man can it bee vnderstoode? *Whither the spirit of the sonnes of men go vpward, and whether the spirite of beastes goe downeward into the earth.*

Yea but you will say there is a great difference betweene the spirite of men & of beasts. For the one departing out of the bodie flyeth vpward to him that gaue it, but the spirit of beastes dying with the bodie goeth downewarde. But what man among a thousand knoweth this? nay, this difference cannot bee vnderstoode by the meere light of mans vnderstanding.

Vers. 22. *Therefore I sawe that there is nothing better, then for a man to reioyce in his wookes: for this is his portion. For who can bring thee to see, what shall come after thee?*

All which thinges being so, we conclude, that those onely are wise in this worlde, who according to the condition of their calling, following an honest kinde of life, doe take their pleasure in such thinges, as they haue well gotten. For hee is a foole, who seeketh to get anie thing else thereby, besides the onelie fruite, that commeth by vsing such thinges, and that determined onely within the compasse of this life, and forgetting his owne profite, tyreth himselfe with vnnecessary yea vayne and most troublesome thoughtes, about thinges to come, whereas God onely challengeth vnto himselfe the knowledge of them.

CHAP. 4.

Vers. 1. *Therefore when I had turned my selfe another way, I considered all the oppressions that are wrought vnder the Sunne, and beholde, there mette me the teares of them that are oppressed, and want a comforter: yea, power resteth in the hande of those that doe oppresse them, and they haue no comforter.*

But

BVT goe to, from this consideration which hath lifted me vp aboue the worlde it selfe, let vs returne to consider those thinges which are done neerer at hande among men themselues.

And here, in the verie entrance I light vpon all kindes of iniurie, wherewith men neuer cease to vexe one another in all places where the Sunne shineth: yea, which is of all other thinges most miserable, euery where there is aboundance of teares shedde, but a man can no where finde any that deliuereth the oppressed. And no maruaile if they haue no man to relieue them in these calamities, considering that power & sway resteth in their hands, by whom they are oppressed.

Vers. 2. Therefore I praysed the dead, that are alreadie dead, aboue the liuing that yet liue.

Therefore their condition seemeth the better, who are already departed out of life, thē theirs that linger yet in life.

Vers. 3. Yea, and he is better then they both, who yet hath not bene, nor hath seene the euill that is wrought vnder the Sunne.

And againe, his state seemeth more worthie to be wished for, then either of theirs, who by reason he was neuer born, hath had no feeling of so many calamities, whereunto all men are subiect, that liue in any place of the earth,

Vers. 4. Also I marked that in euery labour and euery good worke, a man is in daunger to be enuyed of his fellowe: which also is vanitie and a consumption of the minde.

To this euill may be added another also, that I haue marked: that although a man bee neuer so carefull to liue vprightly, and doe behaue himselfe well in any kinde of life, yet he cannot escape the enuie of others: and euen of those that least ought to doe it: which vndoubtedly doth proue the notable vanitie of this life. Enuied

Vers. 5. The foole foldeth his handes and eateth vp his owne flesh, that is, wasteth away him selfe.

And beholde, on the other side there want not ydle, sluggish & men good for nothing, who foulding one hand within another, doe sitte them downe in idlenesse, as if they did put some religion in going about no worke at all vntill at length they be founde to haue wasted thēselues & all that they had.

Vers. 6. Saying, better is a handfull with rest, then as much

as

as both handes can gripe with vexation of minde.

And if you chaunce to aske them, what reason they haue for this slouthfulnesse, they will say, it is better thus peaceablie and quietly to be fedde with a small pittance, as much as the paulme of a mans hande will holde, then sparing neither minde nor bodie, to haue as much as both handes can holde.

Vers. 7. *Then turning my selfe to a place another way, I sawe another vanitie vnder the Sunne.*

And in deede, they doe fooliſhely wreste this for excuse of their slouthfulnesse: yet I also turning to consider this, found thereby another notable kinde of vanitie, among the inhabitantes of the whole earth.

Vers. 8 *There is some man alone, and not hauing any second, who hath neyther Sonne, nor kinsman, of whose labour notwithstanding there is no ende, and whose eyes are neuer satisfied with wealth. And for whome doe I labour, and beguile my soule of good thinges:* that is, my selfe of the vse of all these good things. *This also is vanitie, and an euill disquietnesse.*

A man that is euen alone, who hath no dealing with any man, who hath neither sonne nor kinsman, yet toiling himselfe in continual labour, and bent more & more to increase his wealth, of the sight whereof, his insatiable desire can neuer haue ynough: surely, this is a most wretched man, who at least neuer remembreth to thinke thus with himselfe: for whose benefite doe I torment my selfe day and night, and robbe my selfe of all the commodities of this present life? Surely, who is able to expresse howe great vanitie and howe fond trouble this is?

Vers. 9. *Two are better then one, because they haue better wages for their labour,*

For contrariwise it is the greateſt pleasure that can bee in this life, for a man to haue a companion in his labours: and as two are able to doe more and greater matters then one alone, so the profite that commeth of their labours ioyned together, is the more abundant.

Vers. 10. *Surely, if they fall, that is, if either of them fall, one will lift vp his fellowe, but woe be vnto him that is alone, because if he fall, there is none to lift him vp.*

Behold,

Beholde, if two goe on a iourney together, if one happe to fall, the other is at hand to helpe him vp: contrariwise, he is like pitifully to perish, who hath no companion to lift him vp.

Verſ. 11. *Moreouer, if two lye together, they ſhall haue heat. But how ſhould one alone be hoat.*

And if two lie in a bed together, the one will keepe the other warme, but hee that lyeth alone, lieth colde vnder his coueringes.

Verſ. 12. *And if any man offer violence to him, that is, to either of them, two will ſtand againſt him: finally, a threefold threed is not eaſily broken.*

And if a man ſet vpon either of the two, two are more eaſily able to beate backe one: finallie a corde made of a threefolde twiſt is not eaſily broken.

Verſ. 13. *A childe poore and wiſe is better then a King that is olde and fooliſh, who will no more be admoniſhed.*

Nowe I come to that kinde of life, which whoſoeuer hath attained is vſually accounted the moſt bleſſed of all men, to wit, that high degree of Kings, wherein whoſoeuer is placed, is accounted as a God among men. But for my part I woulde preferre a man being of that age that promiſeth no great matter of it ſelfe, and euen a poore man, ſuch as commonly are deſpiſed, yet a man endued with wiſedome, euen before any King, diſgracing his kingly authoritie, and many yeeres by his follie, and who can neither of him ſelfe foreſee what is meete to be done, nor can abide to be aduiſed by others.

Verſ. 14. *For there is that commeth out of priſon to raigne, and that being borne in his kingdome becommeth poore.*

Yea it falleth out oftener then once, that ſome man is aduaunced euen from the fetters to a kingdome, and that he is brought to extreme pouertie, who was a King not made but borne.

Verſ. 15. *I ſawe all men that walke vnder the ſunne, with the ſeconde childe that ſhall ſtand vp in his place.*

Moreouer we ſee it euery where come to paſſe, that the moſt parte of ſubiectes deſpiſing the King after he is farre growen in yeeres, doe ſtriue to put them ſelues ouer vnto his ſonne that ſhall be his ſucceſſour.

Verſ. 16.

Verſ. 16. *There was no ende vnto the whole people, the whole people* I meane *that were before theſe, and they that ſhall come after theſe, ſhall not reioyce in him. Surely this is alſo vanitie, and a conſumption of minde.*

The ſame alſo fell out in former times, by reaſon that the people neuer contented them ſelues with any one, namely, that they who then liued deſpiſing this mans grandfather, who is nowe ſo much deſired, did greatly affect this man. who is nowe forſaken of the younger ſort that are come vp in their place. And further alſo it will come to paſſe, by that time this man is olde, he ſhall alſo be contemned of their poſteritie whome he did ſo highly pleaſe. For euen this kingly honour is alſo ſubiect to a kinde of vanitie, and ioyned with many and very great troubles.

CHAPTER V.

Verſ. 1. *Take heede to thy foot,* that is, marke whither thou goeſt, *when thou goeſt to the houſe of God, and come neere rather to heare, then to giue the ſacrifice of fooles; for they vnawares draw neere to doe euill.*

THerefore whoſoeuer thou art that deſireſt to knowe, what way thou muſt take, both in maintaining this life, and for the attaining of true happineſſe out of this worlde: firſt of all remember that this is not to be learned in mens ſchooles, but elſewhere, to wit, in that houſe, which God hath choſen and ſanctified for him ſelfe. To this therefore thou muſt come, but ſo prepared as becommeth thee. Therefore going thither conſider eftſoones whither thou goeſt, and to whome thou goeſt, and be not like thoſe fooles, who as if God had neede of their ſacrifices, dreame that they haue fairely done their duetie, when they haue laden the altars with giftes. For ſacrifices were not ordained to that end, that men ſhould reconcile, or deſerue of God by their giftes that they offer: neither are we to go to Gods houſe, to adde anie thing to him, but to receiue ſome thing from him, namely, to heare and to vnderſtand true wiſdome that there ſoundeth. And what ſhould I call them but fooles, who are ſo ignorant,

both

both of the nature and will of God?

Verſ. 2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, nor let thine heart be haſtie to vtter a word before God.*

For God is in heauen and thou vpon earth, therefore let thy wordes be fewe.

Therefore, when thou art about to pray to God, let not thy tongue runne afore thy wittes: yea, beware thou do not by and by with thy mouth powre that out before him, which thou haſt deuiſed with thy ſelfe. For God is on high, full of incomprehenſible maieſtie: but thou art a wretched man creeping vpon earth: neither doe we pray vnto him as ignorant of any thing, or needing our information, but to profeſſe thereby that we doe wholly depend of him, and to giue vnto him his due ſeruice. Therefore vſe but fewe wordes, but let them be holily and deuoutly framed.

Verſ. 3. *For dreames ariſe of the multitude of buſines, and fooliſh ſpeaches of ſuperfluitie of wordes.*

For as dreames are bred of the ſundrie & manifold cares that we take in the day time, ſo fooliſhneſſe doeth manifeſtly bewray it ſelfe in that vaine babbling.

Verſ. 4. *When thou haſt vowed a vowe to God, deferre not to pay it. Howbeit he alloweth not of fooles. Pay that thou haſt vowed.*

That thou haſt vowed vnto God, ſee thou pay cheerefullie, and without delay, that, I ſay, which thou haſt vowed duelie, and as the Lawe commmaundeth: for God is offended with thoſe that make fooliſh vowes. Render therefore, I ſay, vnto God that which thou haſt vowed.

Verſ. 5. *It is better not to vowe, then to vowe, and not perfourme.*

For who compelled thee to vow? Therefore rather then thou ſhouldeſt not be as good as thy vowe, better not to vowe at all.

Verſ. 6. *Giue not thy mouth to make thy fleſh ſinne:* that is, make not a vowe raſhly, whereby to make thy ſelfe guiltie of a ſinne: *neither to ſay before the meſſenger of God, that it is an errour,* that is, pretend not ignorance for the breaking of thy vowe. *For wherefore ſhould God be angrie with thee for thy vowe, and deſtroy the worke of thine hands?*

Therefore

Therefore let no vowe raſhly fall from thy mouth, whereby to drawe vpon thy ſelfe an occaſion of ſinning. Beware of that alſo, leaſt vpon falſe pretence of ignorance, asking abſolution from thy vowe, at the handes of Gods ambaſſadour, I meane, the Prieſt, thou do grievouſly ſinne againſt thy ſelfe: for to what end, by lying in that manner ſhouldeſt thou willingly and wittingly for ſo ſmall a matter, prouoke againſt thy ſelfe the wrath of God who is able to deſtroy all that thou haſt?

Verſ. 7. Surely in multitude of dreames are vanities, and in ſuperfluitie of wordes, but feare thou God.

Finally there are to be ſeene in that fond babbling, as many vanities, as in plaine doting. Therefore here is neede not of wordes, but of doing, that is, of vpright and ſincere feare of God.

Verſ. 8. If thou ſeeſt in a countrie oppreſſion of the poore, and defrauding of right and equitie, thinke not too much vpon this manner of doing whatſoeuer men liſt; For he that is higher then the higheſt worketh theſe things, and there are that are higher then they.

And let it not cauſe thee to forgoe thy godlineſſe, and to giue ouer the duety of a man that feareth God, becauſe thou ſeeſt ſome oppreſſed, who ought to haue bene relieued, or becauſe thou ſeeſt in ſome places that lawes are broken vnder colour of right, therefore to begin to doubt of that prouidence of God: For howſoeuer theſe things ſeeme to be toſſed vp and downe, as if the worlde had no gouernour, yet be ſure there is one aboue all theſe, that abuſe the honour whereunto they are aduaunced, who hath alſo ſtanding by him innumerable and moſt mightie miniſters, whome in due time he may ſet a worke to execute his decrees vpon theſe proude men.

Verſ. 9. But the earth is the moſt excellent among all things. The king becommeth a ſeruant to the field.

Howbeit, howſoeuer the greateſt part of men by monie giue thé ſelues almoſt to infinite trades in this life, yet this, I ſay, that tillage is not onely the moſt profitable, but the moſte neceſſarie of all other. For the earth is it which being

being as it were the common mother of all, cherisheth all, and the fruit whereof not kings are able to want, but are subiect vnto it.

Vers. 10. *He that loueth money is not satisfied with money, and so him that loueth manie* followers *there is no good that commeth of it, and this is also vanitie.*

But monie which all men doe greedilie seeke to get, hath neuer satisfied any man: and he that is delighted with manie followers, shall in the ende finde by experience that he hath gotten no good thereby: for this also is full of vanitie.

Vers. 11. *When goods increase, they are increased also that eate them, and what good commeth thereof to the owner, but the beholding thereof with his eies?*

For the more goods man hath, the more servants he hath need of, in keeping of whom he must be at the more cost: & if any fruite come thereof vnto the owner of them, surely herein it is, that he seeth so manie more at home, vpon whose meate and maintenance he spendeth his goods.

Vers. 12. *The sleepe of him that trauaileth is sweet, whether he eate litle or much, but the fulnes of the rich man will not suffer him to sleepe.*

After the distempered and riotous diet of rich men followeth an vnquiet night: but the sleepe of labouring men that liue from hand to mouth, whether they eate sparinglie, or make larger meales then they vse, is sweet and quiet.

Vers. 13. *This is also an euill miserie that I haue seene vnder the sunne, that riches are reserued to the hurt of the owner.*

Moreouer I haue seene also another great euill among men that gape euery where for riches: namelie, that oftentimes it prooueth, that they doe with so great care laye vp such stoore of riches, euen to their owne harme.

Vers. 14. *For riches oftentimes are cast away by some euill chance, and that rich man hath begotten a sonne who hath nothing betweene his hands.*

Namely.

Namely, when that which a man hath gotten by taking ſo long and ſo painefull care, he looſeth at once by ſome euill chance, either by the fault of the owner, or ſome other body, ſo that he leaueth not ſo much as one farthing to his children of his owne bodie begotten.

Verſ. 15. *And him ſelfe as he came out of his mothers wombe, returneth naked, to goe euen as he came, and to reape any thing of his trauaile, which he may carie away in his hand.*

And him ſelfe departeth as naked out of his life, when he returneth to the earth, as he came naked out of his mothers wombe: namely, departing euen in that manner hee came, and hauing not the woorth of a haire left of al he had gotten by his ſo great trauaile.

Verſ. 16. *Moreouer this is alſo a great euill, that in all points as he came, ſo alſo he departeth: what hath he left then of all that, for which he hath laboured in vaine?*

Surely he is moſt miſerable in two reſpectes, namely, for that not onely he departeth as he came, which is the common ende to all men: but becauſe euen before his death he was ſpoiled and vndone of all thoſe goods, which in vaine he had gotten by ſo great labour.

Verſ. 17. *Alſo all his dayes he ſhall eate in darkeneſſe,* that is, mourning and hiding him ſelfe out of mens ſight: *and he ſhall haue indignation, and much grieſe and rage.*

In ſo much that he ſpendeth the reſt of his life that remaineth after he is ſpoiled of all his goods, moſt miſerablie, lurking as it were in darkeneſſe, full of impatiencie and calamities, and euen of rage and madneſſe.

Verſ. 18. *Behold then what I haue ſeene to be good & comely,* namely, *to eate and drinke, and to ſee the good that commeth of all a mans labour,* that is, to enioy the goods he hath gotten by his labour, *wherein he hath trauailed vnder the Sunne, the whole number of the dayes of his life, which God giueth vnto him. For this is his portion.*

Therefore I repeate that againe, which I haue alreadie ſo often ſaid: namely, that there is no other fruit to he ſought in the things of this worlde, then to vſe, for the cheriſhing of his life the goods that he hath gotten by honeſt labour, ſo long as God graunteth him vſe of life, and to ſeeke for no o-

ther

ther profite therby, but only to be cõtent with this his lotte.

Verſ. 19. *Yea that God hath giuen to any man riches and wealth, and hath graunted him power to eate thereof, and to take his portion, and to reioyce in his labour, this is the gift of God.*

In the meane time let euery man continuallie remember both that his riches howe great ſoeuer they are, as alſo that a man hath libertie quietlie to vſe them, after he hath gotten them by his owne labour, and by doing the beſt he can, proceede onely of the meere bountifulneſſe of the moſt gratious God, and therefore that he is both to aske at his hand, and alſo in holie manner to referre it to his glorie.

Verſ. 20. *For he doeth not much remember his life, becauſe God anſwereth him in the ioy of his hart.*

But O happie and bleſſed man, by whome God is intreated to graunt him this quietnes of minde, & that conſciẽce, that doth not pricke him when he calleth to remembrance euen a very few things in his former life.

CHAPTER VI.

VERSE 1. *There is another euill alſo which I haue marked and that a very great one, vpon men,* that is, lying vpon moſt mẽ.

AND how great the benefit of god is, appeareth by the cõtrariety of calamities, which I haue marked in moſt mẽ.

Verſ. 2. *There is man to whom God hath giuen riches & wealth, & glorie, and his ſoule wanteth nothing of all that it deſireth but God giueth him not power to eat thereof, but a ſtraunger deuoureth them. This alſo is vanitie, and an euill miſerie.*

For how many may ſee flouriſhing in great wealth, and all manner gallantneſſe of life, ſo that they ſeemed to want nothing that they could deſire, which notwithſtanding they are kept from enioying, by reaſon they are ſuddenly conueyed away to ſtraungers? This is alſo a very great vanitie, and doth manifeſtly ſhewe, both how inconſtant the condition of all things in this world is, & alſo how vncerten the poſſeſſion of them is.

Verſ. 3. *If any man haue begotten an hundred children, & lined many yeeres, and the dayes of his yeares he multiplyed, whoſe ſoule notwithſtanding hath not beene ſatisfied, with thoſe good things, &*

hath euẽ wãted burial, I say that one born out of time is better thẽ he.

For giue me a man whome God hath vouchsafed both a very large family, & so long a life, that he can make account of very many yeares; who yet at the last hath not beene suffered to enioy these his goods, and whose life past is dishonoured by his infamous end wanting buriall, surely I would think that such a mans state were worse, then the state of him that is borne out of time.

Vers. 4. For be it that he did come in vaine, and is gone into darkenes, and his name be couered with darkenes.

For be it that he that is borne out of time be come as if he had not come, as it were the night so couering his comming, that there shall neuer be any talke of him.

Vers. 5. Moreouer be it that he neuer saw the Sunne, nor knew it, he hath quietnesse, that is, more quiet and better condition, *aboue the other.*

And as for that he neuer saw the Sunne, nor euer knew any thing in the world, it is so farre from making his state that is borne out of time to be the worse, that contrariwise euen therein also his condition is the better, because he hath bin free from all those troubles, that haue so miserably disquieted that other man.

Vers. 6. And if he haue liued two thousand yeares & seene no good, shall not all goe to one place?

For be it that some man hath liued euen two thousand yeares, yet notwithstanding besides that his miserie hath bin so much the longer, at the length one and the same ende bringeth them both to one place.

Vers. 7. All the labour of a man is for his mouth, yet his soule is not satisfied.

Finally let worldly men weary them selues as long, and as much as they wil in taking care for the matters of this world, the fruit of that labour is but this, that they may haue nourishment for this life: and all their labour cannot be stretched farther, for as much as it is not limited within the narrow compasse of this life; and yet this meat and drinke is not sufficient to hold out life, in as much as it serueth but to nourish the bodie for a small time.

Vers. 8. For what hath the wise man more then the fole, and

what

what hath the miserable, and he that knoweth how to walke among the liuing? that is, what difference is there betweene him that is in miserie, and him that knoweth the way how to liue here conueniently?

And whether we consider the very nature of those things, that serue to mainteine this life, or the men them selues, who by death are deliuered from this necessitie of eating & drinking, what excellencie hath a wiseman aboue a foole? and what difference is there betweene him that liueth in miserie and him that liueth conueniently among men? Surely none at all, because the life of them all is vpheld by those things, which are wasted in the very vsing of them, and death maketh all men one as good as another.

Vers. 9. Better is the sight of the eyes, then the soule that goeth away, that is, better is the condition of a cheerefull countenance, then his that by the palensse of his coũtenance sheweth that he pineth away, *but this also is vanitie and feedeth a man with vind.*

But you will say, It is better to haue a shining and cheerefull countenance, then to looke pale and sicklie, whereof the former befalleth to them that liue at harts ease, the latter to the miserable & hungry. I confesse it. But euen in these there is great vanitie, and much vaine trouble whereby that oddes that is betweene them is soone made euen.

Vers. 10. For his name that hath beene *is alreadie named, and it is knowne that he was a man: and he cannot striue with him that is mightier then him selfe.*

For he hath already gone thorough his lot, & hath gotten him a name alreadie which also shall continue. But it is manifest that setting aside all those outward things, whereby in this life a wise man is discerned from a foole, and he that liueth in miserie and pouertie from a rich man, yet as wel the one as the other is a man, that is a most miserable and weake creature, who whither he will or no, doth altogether depend vpon another, to wit God, who is mightier then him selfe.

V. 11. Surely many things increase vanitie, & what hath a mã left.

And the more things a man possesseth, or dealeth withall, the more sorts of vanitie is he subiect vnto, and of all those very many things, what hath he left at the last?

Vers. 12. *For what man knoweth what is good for him in his life, & in the number of the daies of his vanitie, which God hath made as a shadow? And who can declare vnto man, what shalbe after him vnder the Sunne?*

Finally what man can rightly iudge, what is truly profitable for him in the whole course of his life, all the daies whereof passing away like a shadow, he spendeth, so that he hath scarse time to looke vpon those things that are present? But as for things to come, whereabout men speciallie labour, can any declare them vnto man?

CHAPTER VII.

VERSE 1. *A good name is better then good ointment, & the day of a mans byrth better then the day wherein he was borne.*

NOW that I haue prooued mans life to be so vaine, and shewed it to be subiect to so many miseries without nũber, should a man therefore be discouraged, & cast away all care of his life? No in no wise, but rather we must so order it, that we doe, as much as may be, partly auoid the discommodities thereof, partly make light of them, & gather what fruit we can therby: concerning which matter & first for auoiding of euill I wil in the former place recite certaine good lessons. And among them let this be first. That a good name is the richest reward of a life honestly led, and to be preferred before any delights and pleasures whatsoeuer; which whosoeuer hath purchased, there is no cause why he should feare death, but there is cause why he should thinke the day therof to be more commodious for him then the day wherein he was borne, because the day of death shall set vpon his head a crowne of that blessed good report, which he hath purchased by honest life.

Ver. 2. *It is better to go to the house of morning, then to the house of feasting, the house* I say of mourning, *wherein is the end of all men, and he that liueth, layeth it vp in his hart.*

Therefore we must giue eare vpto them, who get vp al the pleasures they can, to put as farre from them as may be all thought

thought of death as troubleſome and bitter. For death is the ende of this life, whereof it ſtandeth vs greatly in hande to beware that we be not ſuddenly ouertaken. Therefore it is better for a man to ioyne him ſelfe with mourners, among whome he may ſee and heare ſuch things as may put him in minde that he is mortall; then to ſit among feaſtes, among whome a man may be made to forget that he is a man.

Verſ. 3. Anger is better then laughter, that is, iuſt diſpleaſure of minde, then vnmeaſurable reioycing: *for by an euill countenance the hart will be good*, that is, pleaſant: that holy ſadneſſe breedeth ioy.

It is alſo better to haue ſome ſorow of mind, & to be greeued for things done amiſſe, then to be much giuen to reioycing and laughter: for of that ſadneſſe, at the length doeth grow true gladneſſe of minde.

Verſ. 4. The hart of wiſemen is in the houſe of mourning, & the hart of fooles in the houſe of follie.

Therefore in wiſe mens mindes a man may marke ſage and graue conſiderations, of ſuch calamities as may happen to men, to the end that no aduerſitie may take them vnprouided, and that they may not be deceiued by the moſt falſe and vaine ſhewes of this world and ſo cauſed to depart from their dutie. But contrariwiſe fooles thinke of nothing but of their moſt vaine delights and wanton toyes, vntill not thinking of it, they be ouertaken by ſome heauie miſhappe.

Verſ. 5. It is better to heare the rebuke of a wiſe man, then that a man ſhould heare the ſongs of fooles.

But contrariwiſe thou whoſoeuer thou art, that art careful to looke better about thy ſelfe, make this account: that it is farre more to be deſired, if not by a mans ſelfe, at leaſt by ſome other to be reprooued, then to be rocked a ſleepe with the toying ſpeeches of ſuch as ſing fooliſh ſongs.

Verſ. 6. For like the noiſe of thornes vnder the potte, ſuch is the laughing of a foole: which is alſo vanitie.

For as thornes burning vnder a kettel make a great crackling when they flame, but are out by and by: ſo the exceſſiue and immoderate laughter of fooles is ſoone done, and vaniſhed away.

Verſ. 7. Surelie oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad, and a gift

corrupteth the heart.

Howbeit *I* confeſſed, that thinges goe ſo in the worlde, that ſome that are otherwiſe wiſe, by iniuries offered, and deſire of reuenge, are driuen to doe thoſe thinges, which bewray not onely folly, but euen madneſſe: and other ſome, although it be againſt their owne conſcience, yet, for deſire to increaſe their owne wealth, doe goe ſo farre, that they abuſe euen Lawe it ſelfe to doe iniurie. But albeit this miſchiefe can not be taken altogether out of the worlde, yet there wanteth not a remedie, whereby a wiſe man may looke to himſelfe, that hee alſo vpon this occaſion bee not carryed away headlong.

Verſ. 8. *The ende of a thing is better then the beginning thereof, and he that is ſlowe to anger, then he that is proud in ſpirit.*

Firſt therefore, let that be helde, which to bee moſt true, both the verie nature of God, who is a iuſt Iudge, and alſo continuall experience doeth proue: to witte, that the ende which followeth vpon ſuch wickedneſſe, is not ſutable to the beginnings of wicked men, becauſe experience it ſelfe proueth at the length their condition to be the better, who patiently and to the ende haue ſuffered ſuch iniuries as haue bene done vnto them: then theirs, who made no conſcience proudly and arrogantly to vexe the innocent.

Verſ. 9. *Be not thou haſtie in thy ſpirite to bee angrie: becauſe anger reſteth in the boſome of fooles,*

Therefore, being prouoked eftſoones, beware that thou burſte not out in anger againſt him, by vvhome thou art harmed: but on the other ſide, it is the parte of fooles, to keepe anger cloſe in their boſome, vvhich vvill put in their mindes none but verie euill counſell.

Verſ. 10. *Say not, howe commeth it to paſſe, that the former dayes were better then theſe? For thou canſt not inquire of this thing according to wiſedome.*

Much leſſe mayeſt thou charge God himſelfe, vvhich ouer manie doe, as if hee muſt needes giue thee an account, vvhy this latter age is vvoorſe then the former. For this chopping of logicke vvith God, can not proceede from any thing elſe, but from intollerable pride.

Verſ. 11. *Wiſedome is good with an inheritance: and exeel-*

lencie

lenoie is theirs that see the Sunne.

Surely, among all that enioy the benefite of this life, hee is blessed, vpon vvhome God hath bestovved both vvisedome, and other thinges conuenient for the maintenaunce and vvell passing ouer of this life.

Vers. 12. *Because man is couered in the shadow of wisedome and in the shadowe of money: but the excellencie is in wisedome, which giueth life vnto the possessours thereof.*

For vvisedome is like a shaddovvie bovvre, vnder vvhich a man may flye for succour against all stormes: and albeit euen these outvvarde matters make much for the atteining of quietnesse in many aduersities: yet vvisedome is the thing that affourdeth true life to them that haue enioyed it.

Vers. 13. *Consider the workes of God: For who can make streight, that which he hath made crooked?*

Therefore in these cases, although they be such, as vvould moue a man to indignation, whereby men hauing their eies dazeled with impatiencie, sinne greatly, both against God and against themselues, betake thy selfe to wisdome, whereby thou mayst perceiue, that euen in this turning vpside downe of all Lawe and right, yet God most wisely and most iustly goeth about some worke, which in due time shall appeare. And canst thou or any man else make streight, that which he hath made crooked?

Vers. 14. *In the day of good*, that is, in prosperitie, *bee in good*, that is, enioy the benefite of God: *but, in the day of euill, looke:* that is, in aduersitie be not hastie, but consider diligently of the whole matter. *For God hath made this also ouer against that*, that is, aduersitie directly contrary to prosperitie, *for that cause that man may not finde any thing after him*, that is, that man may bee compelled to rest in his prouidence.

What is then to be done? namely, enioy prosperitie in a holy maner, by the same benefite of God. And when thou feelest any aduersitie, be not grieued out of reason, but reuerently, & in the feare of God, waigh it with thy selfe. For so it pleaseth God to temper the life of man by giuing sometime prosperity, sometime aduersity: & that in such sort, that men

finde by experience, they are not able to atteine to his wisedome, how much soeuer they straine their wittes to searche out the causes of his workes.

Vers. 15. *I sawe all these thinges in the dayes of my vanitie: There is a iust man that perisheth in his iustice, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his dayes in his wickednesse.*

And yet, thinke not this troubled state of mens affaires, to be any straunge matter. For thou seest no more, then I my selfe also haue seene, while I haue liued here the same life subiect to vanitie that other men doe: to witte, that honest men do often times perish by occasion of their vprightnesse, and contrariwise wicked men doe flourish verie long, by meanes of their owne wickednesse.

Vers. 16. *Bee not ouer iust, neither bee ouer wise: For why shouldest thou be found a foole?*

Doest thou then knowe, what thou hast here to doe? Beware, least hauing taken a wrong measure of the compasse of mans witte, thou define that which is right, after thine owne liking, and seeking to be wise aboue thy reach, thou be found to be, not the man thou wouldest be taken to be, but rather a blocke and a foole.

Vers. 17. *Be not too wicked, neither be too foolish. For why shouldest thou dye, not in thy due time?*

Yet on the other side, I woulde not haue thee so hang in suspense and doubt, that thou shouldest fall into their madnesse, who, because they cannot vnwind themselues out of that which so curiously and without all religion they inquire after, denying Gods prouidence, doe fal to opē vngodlines: For so thou shalt wilfully bring destruction vpon thine owne head.

Vers. 18. *It is good for thee to lay holde of this, and yet not to withdraw thy hande from that,* that is, the other extreme: *for he that feareth God, getteth out of all these thinges.*

Therefore holde thou the meane betweene those two extremities, neither inclining wholy to this side nor to that, but standing so steadie, that one extreme may bee tempered with another. For this is the onely meanes to escape out of all these streights, namely, if a man so behaue himselfe, that neither prophanely inquiring into God him selfe, nor wickedly

wickedly ſcorning at that, which hee can not conceiue. but falling downe before the Maieſtie of God, which wee cannot comprehend, doe reſt wholy in his will.

Verſ. 19. *Wiſedome ſtrengtheneth a wiſe man aboue tenne mightie men in a citie.*

Therefore followe after this wiſedome, and neuer depart from it, for it will be a ſtronger ſtay for thee, in all thoſe aduentures, then if thou hadſt the power of tenne mightie princes of any citie.

Verſ. 20. *Surely, there is none righteous vpon earth, that doeth good, and ſinneth not.*

And thus hath bene declared, howe wee ought to ſtande affected towardes God in this ſo great and vnreaſonable diſorder. Now let vs ſhewe howe it becommeth vs to behaue our ſelues toward the men themſelues that are thus out of order, and out of reaſon. Firſt therefore, let vs ſet downe this, that there is no one man in the whole earth, be hee of neuer ſo honeſt and vpright a life, that neuer ſwarueth from the duetie of a good man.

Verſ. 21. *Yea, giue not thy hearte to all words that are ſpoken, neyther beare thy ſeruant when he curſeth thee.*

But thou wilt ſay, whereto ſerueth this? namely, leaſt when thou haſt bene hurt by a man in any matter, though it be moſt vnworthily (as for example, if thine owne ſeruaunt bee ſo farre carried againſt thee his maſter, that hee euen raile vpon thee and reuile thee) thou ſet thy whole minde vpon the indignitie of this fact.

Verſ. 22. *For euen thy heart knoweth often, that thou alſo haſt curſed others.*

Rather aſke counſell of thy ſelfe, and thou ſhalt finde, that it hath befalne thee more, then once to giue railing ſpeeches to another man. Thereupon will followe, that thou wilt beare much more moderately, that which is committed againſt thy ſelfe, and being priuie to thy ſelfe of mans weakeneſſe, wilt bee more readie to graunt pardon, whereof thou thy ſelfe haſt had experience, then to reuenge an iniurie.

Verſ. 23. *All theſe thinges haue I tryed in wiſedome,* that is, by the helpe of my wiſedome: *And I ſaid, I will be wiſe. But*

that

that wisedome was farre from me.

Moreouer, in this most troublesome conflict, let this bee the second precept. That when it falleth out, that a man hath bridled his impatiencie, hee doe not thereupon perswade himselfe that he is become a moderate and a wise man, but if hee haue well begunne, let him with courage and constancie continually thinke howe hee may goe forwarde, rather then please him selfe in some thinges that are past. And I praye you, beleeue mee that haue experience: for I tell you no more, then I my selfe, by the wisedome which you knowe God hath giuen mee, haue learned, which I am not ashamed to confesse, that by laying open mine owne errour I may instruct others. Trusting vpon that wisedome that God had giuen mee, whereunto also was added experience, I thought my selfe in deede to be a wise man. But verie falsely, for it was so much the farther gone from me, as I thought it had come neerer vnto me.

Vers. 24. For that is farre off which hath bene, & that which is most deepe, who can finde?

And no maruaile: for thinges past, when they are once gone, are but slenderly knowen: but thinges to come, that as yet lie hidde in a most deepe pitte, who can fetche out from thence? Nowe all the deliberatien of a wise man commeth from conference of thinges past and to come.

Vers. 25. Both I and my heart compassed about, to knowe and finde out wisedome and reason, and to knowe the wickednesse of follie and the foolishnesse of madnesse.

But there is also another thing of great waight, whereof I will seriously put you in minde. For on euery side I haue endeuoured most carefully to knowe, trie and finde out whatsoeuer is done wisely and according to reason, and euen in searching out mens wickednes, and in what thinges follie and a thousande sortes of madnesse bewraye themselues.

Vers. 26. And I founde a thing more bitter then death, to witte, a woman who is a snare, and her heart as netses, and her handes as drawnettes. He that is good before God, shall escape from

from her, but the ſinner ſhall be taken by her.

And I founde one thing more bitter then death it ſelfe: to witt, a woman ſetting her whole deſire vpon this, howe to intrapp men in netts and ſnares, as the hunter doth beaſtes, and to keepe them bound in fetters. Yet hee ſhall eſcape this miſchiefe who vnfainedlie ſerueth God: contrariwiſe he ſhall fall into her nettes, that giueth him ſelfe to wickedneſſe.

Verſ. 27. *See, this haue I found, ſaieth the Preacher, from one to one*, that is weighing euerie thing diligently, *to finde a reaſon*, that is, at the length to ſee what is good to bee done.

And that you may knowe that ſuch catchers will meete with you in euerie place, and ſuch alſo as ſuffer them ſelues to be taken, heare what I the Preacher ſignifie vnto thee in plaine wordes, that is, what I haue found after moſt diligent ſearch of all things.

Verſ. 29. *Onely, ſee, this haue I founde, that God made men righteous, but they haue ſought out manie inventions.*

But this I haue founde to bee moſte true: that God created man vpright in the beginning, whoe afterwarde by his owne diſcourſing brought vpon himſelfe all theſe calamities, and therefore both that God is free from all fault, and that man hath brought vpon him ſelfe all theſe miſchiefes.

CHAPTER VIII.

VERSE 1. *Who is as the wiſe man?* that is ſuch a one as hee that is trulie wiſe? *and who knoweth the interpretation of things? The wiſdome of a man maketh his face to ſhine, and the ſtrength of his countenance is chaunged.*

AND is there any that deſerueth the name of a wiſe man? can any man tell what things meane? Surely wiſdome ſhineth in the verie cleate and ſmooth countenance of a man

man, without all fierceneſſe and frowning: whereof I will nowe declare other profitable vſes in matters of greateſt weight.

Verſ. 2. *I aduertiſe thee to take heede to the mouth of the King, and vnto the worde of the othe of God*: that is, keeping eſpecially the othe whereby thou art bound vnto God.

Take heede eſpecially and followe my counſell, to obſerue whatſoeuer the King hath commanded, I meane ſo farre as may, without breaking the othe wherewith we are all bound to God.

Verſ. 3. *Haſte not to goe foorth of his ſight, ſtande not in an euill thing, for he will doe whatſoeuer pleaſeth him.*

And if peraduenture that which he commaundeth thee, doe not like thee, yet beware howe thou goe vnaduiſedly out of his ſight, as is the manner of proude and wrathfull men: but remember thou haſt to deale with him, who may doe with thee what he pleaſeth, and ſtande not in that which thou haſt ſaid or done amiſſe.

Verſ. 4. *Where the word of the King is, there is a lorde: and who ſhall ſay vnto him, What doeſt thou?*

For the Kings commandement goeth alwayes with power to bring it to paſſe, and what of his ſubiects, when he commaundeth this, or that, is able to ſtand againſt him?

Verſ. 5. *He that keepeth the commandement, ſhall not prove, the euill thing*, that is, calamitie: *but fitte ſeaſon and iudgement*, that is, howe it becommeth him to behaue him ſelfe, *knoweth the heart of the wiſe man.*

To be ſhort, he that ſheweth him ſelfe modeſt and obedient towardes him, whome he is bounde to obey, is free from many daungers and diſcommodities. But when and howe a man ought to obey; in a worde, what is the right rule of all obedience, wiſedome it ſelfe bringeth and declareth to the minde of a wiſe man.

Verſ. 6. *For to euerie deſire*, that is, *to euerie thing that a man purpoſeth, there is a ſeaſonable time and iudgement: but a man hath manie euills vpon him*: that is, men are ſubiect to manie diſcommodities and miſeries.

Surely whatſoeuer men purpoſe to do, the Lord hath moſt wiſely, and fitlie foreappointed to euery thing his due ſea-

ſon

ſon, and moſt conuenient meanes to bring it to paſſe, whereupon dependeth the iſſue thereof. But men either not knowing, or not regarding this, bring vpon themſelues infinite miſeries and calamities.

Verſ. 7. Becauſe he knoweth not that which ſhalbe: and indeede, who can tell him when it ſhalbe.

For that which they haue determined with them ſelues, they are perſwaded ſhall come to paſſe, and euen at ſuch time and in ſuch manner as they haue imagined, whereas notwithſtanding neither of themſelues, nor by ought that any other man can tell them, they are able certeinlie to know firſt whether that the thing ſhal be, and then if it ſhall be, when it ſhall be.

Verſ. 8. No man is Lorde of his owne breath, to receiue it: neither hath he power ouer the day of death: neither is it in his hand to caſt foorth in battell: neither ſhall wickedneſſe deliuer the poſſeſſour thereof.

And indeede howe can a man chalenge to him ſelfe the knowledge of things to come, who is not Lorde ſo much as of his owne life, ſo that he can either draw his breath longer, or die later then God hath appointed him? Nay it is not in his power who hath throwen a darte in battell to direct the ſtroke of his darte: neither can wicked men by anie of their wicked prankes eſcape deſtruction.

Verſ. 9. I ſawe all theſe things, and I ſet my minde vpon euerie worke that is done vnder the Sunne. I ſawe a time, wherein man beareth rule ouer man to his deſtruction.

Therefore whoſoeuer will examine the ſtate of worldlie matters according to the rule of his owne capacitie, he muſt needes be tormented with manie things and bee tormented in vaine, which I ſpeake by experience; for there is nothing done vnder the ſunne which I haue not marked, and the reaſon whereof I haue not ſearched: wherin as I was labouring, I lighted vpon a time of all other moſt miſerable, wherin it falleth out, that there are none other more daungerous and miſcheiuous vnto men, then euen they are, by whome they ought to haue beene well gouerned.

Verſ. 10. Then alſo I ſawe wicked men buried, and they returned, and thoſe that hauing come out of the houſe of the holy, that

is,

is God walked foorth, To be forgotten in that citie wherein they had behaued themſelues as did become them, which is alſo vanitie.

But what ſhould a man make of that, which I my ſelſe alſo haue ſeene? namely that when wicked men are dead, there come other in there roomes, in whome they ſeeme as it were to be borne againe: contrariwiſe that the godlie, who haue behaued themſelues deuoutlie in the houſe of God, are thruſt out thence, and that there memorie is gone euen in that verie citie wherein they ſo behaued themſelues, which alſo prooueth the exceeding vanitie of men.

Verſ. 11. *Becauſe the worde commeth not foorth by and by,* that is puniſhment is not foorth with awarded *againſt euill deedes, therefore the heart of men is full in them to doe euill.*

And if God doe not by and by take puniſhment of the wicked, you ſhall ſtraight way ſee men caried headlong, and ſtriue to runne one before another vnto all wickednes, as if all euill men were ſure to go ſcotfree.

Verſ. 12. *Surely the vngodlie doeth euill an hundreth times, and he is differred,* that is, God vſeth delay with him: *but I know that it ſhall go well with them that feare God, that feare,* I ſay, *his ſight.*

In deede they are therein greatly deceiued. For albeit God for a time delay the puniſhment due to the wicked, and ſinners by heaping ſinne vpon ſinne, doe abuſe that his ſingular goodnes: yet ſhall it goe well with the good, to witt, ſuch as feare God and are afraid to offend him.

Verſ. 13. *But it ſhall not goe well with the wicked, neither ſhall he prolong his daies, but be ſhalbe as a ſhadow that feareth not the ſight of God.*

Contrariwiſe the end of wicked men ſhall be euill, which their life though prolonged for a time, yet at the laſt ſhall come vnto. For they ſhall all vaniſh away as a ſhadow, who haue not feared the threatnings and wrath of the moſt patient God.

Verſ. 14. *There is alſo another vanitie which is doone vpon earth, that there be righteous men, to whom it cometh according to the workes of the wicked, and there are wicked men to whome it commeth*

commeth according to the doing of the righteous. This also I said was vanitie.

But there falleth out also another thing in the world more contrarie yet to mans reason: to witt, that oftentimes the lot of righteous men is none other, then if they were wicked, and contrariwise prosperitie runneth as currantly on wicked mens side, as if they liued neuer so holily and vprightly. which also among other seemed to mee to be a verie great argument of the vncerten and inconstant state of worldlie matters.

Vers. 15. *Therefore I praised ioy, because man hath no good thing vnder the sunne,* that is, as pertaining to this life, being otherwise most miserable, and these fraile matters, *but to eat and drinke and reioyce,* that is cheerefully to vse those good things for the cherishing of the bodie, *& this will stick by him,* that is, this fruite he shall be sure to reape, *of his labour, in the daies of his life, which God hath graunted him vnder the sunne.*

Therefore not without good reason I said often, that as for this life and the things belonging thereunto, a man can not doe better, then to cast of this not onely vnprofitable, but euen most troublesome curiositie and pensiuenes, and sweetlie to enioy the things that God hath giuen him for the vse of this life: for this is like to be the fruit of that labour, which he hath bestowed vpon these transitorie things, all the time he hath liued here vpon earth.

Vers. 16. *For I applied my mind to knowe wisdome, and thoroughlie to vnderstand the busines that is done on earth: wherefore euen for daies and nightes man seeth no sleepe with his eies.*

When I had indeavoured with great studie to atraine the reason of all things that come to passe in the world, and had thoroughlie searched all those things wherein men with taking so great care doe wearie themselues, so that neither day nor night there commeth anie sleepe in their eies.

Vers. 17. *And I saw by euery worke of God, that men cannot finde out anie worke of his that hath bene vnder the sunne, for the searching whereof men doe labour and yet finde it not: For although the wise man should say hee knoweth it, yet can hee not find it.*

I found that the reason of that order & prouidēce, wherby

almighty

almightie God gouerneth all and euery thing, doth so farre passe all capacitie and vnderstanding of men, that though the wisest man that euer was, vse neuer so great cunning and diligence to finde them out, and make his boast that he hath attained this knowledge: yet he is not able to reach vnto no not the knowledge of one of Gods workes.

CHAPTER IX.

Vers. 1. *Therefore all these I laide vp in my heart*, that is, I determined with my selfe and studied, *to make all this plaine*, that is, throughly and plainly to vnderstand it: *to wit, that iust and wise men and their workes are in the handes of God*, that is, laid vp with the Lord, by whome they are gouerned after a secret manner which we are not able to reach, *yea and men knowe not either loue or hatred by all thinges that are in their sight.*

THis therefore standeth with me for a sure principle, which I will afterward more at large declare and that plainely: that both iust and wise men themselues, and whatsoeuer doth befal them, are gouerned after some secret maner onely by God almightie, which no mortall man is able to finde out: in so much that by all thinges which a man can see, and which come in his way, that is by the present state of this life, a man can not conclude either of Gods loue or hatred towards him.

Vers. 2. *For all these things fall out to the iust, as to all men: there is one euent to the iust and to the wicked: to the good and cleane, and to the vncleane: to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner, he that sweareth, as he that feareth an othe.*

For all those things, as health and sicknes, ioy and heauines, riches and pouertie, long and short life, honour and dishonour, finally all prosperitie and aduersitie in this worlde fall out all after one sort to the iust as to other men. I say both the honest and the wicked, the good or the cleane, and he that is defiled with wickednes and vncleannes, hee that serueth God and he that dispiseth him, are subiect all to the same

ſame lotte, there is all one condition in this life to the good man and vnto the ſinner, and to him that maketh light of ſwearing, and him that putteth a conſcience in ſwearing.

Verſ. 3. This euill is moſt grieuous *among all that are done vnder the Sunne, that* there is *the ſame ſucceſſe to all*, that is, to good and euill: *and moreouer that the hart of the children of men is full of miſerie, and madneſſe is in their hart, in their life: and afterward* they muſt goe *to the dead.*

And indeede among all things that are done vnder the Sunne this is moſt grieuous to mans reaſon, that euery thing happeneth to euery man. And vpon the necke of this alſo commeth another, that after ſo great and ſo many calamities indured in this life, and ſo many things fooliſhly done, at the laſt men muſt goe downe to the dead.

Verſ. 4. For he that is reckoned among the reſt of the liuing hath hope. For a liue dog is better then a dead lyon.

For he that is reckoned among the reſt of the liuing, hath ſome hope left of better happe, and as we ſay in our common prouerb: A liue dog is to be preferred before a dead lyon.

Verſ. 5. For the liuing know that they ſhal dye: but the dead know nothing: neyther haue they any more reward. For their memorie is forgotten.

For the liuing in deede know that their life ſhall not laſt euer, but in the meane time they enioy life, and the conſideration of their mortallity is able & ought to inſtruct them. But the dead, after they are once paſt this life, haue no more feeling nor knowledge of any thing that is here done: neyther can any thing be added vnto them to make them better. For their memory is buried in deepe forgetfulneſſe.

Verſ. 6. Both their loue, and their hatred, and their enuie are alreadie aboliſhed and they ſhall haue no more portion of all thoſe things that are done vnder the Sunne.

They haue loſt whatſoeuer in this life they either loued or hated, and whatſoeuer they earneſtly ſought after, they haue no part, nor euer ſhall haue of all thoſe things, that are done vnder the Sunne.

Verſ. 7. Goe, eat thy bread ioyfullie, and drinke thy wine with a glad minde. But now *let thy works be pleaſing vnto God.*

Which beeing ſo, againe I come to this point, to put thee

in mind whosoeuer thou art, that leauing those secretes that are onely in Gods hands, thou be content with thine owne and gape not after other mens goods, finallie that passing away this life with a cheerefull and quiet minde in the vse of thine owne goods, thou be alwaies intentiue to this one thing, that thou maist approoue thy workes vnto God.

Vers. 8. *At all times let thy garments be shining, and let not oyle be lacking vpon thine head.*

And yet I doe not simplie discommend something aboue that which euen for bare necessity mans life cannot be without, for as much as God hath for mans sake created not onely things necessarie, but many things also to serue for ornament, and honest deiight. Therefore let euen thy garment shine, and I forbid thee not to sprinckle thine heade with sweete oyntments, seeing God of his liberalitie hath graunted them also vnto thee.

Vers. 9. *See life*, that is, enioy life, *with the wife whome thou loueſt all the daies*, I say, *of thy vanitie. For this is thy portion in thy life and in thy labour wherein thou trauaileſt vnder the Sunne.*

If thou haue gotten a wife, spend with her sweetely, as with a thing most deere vnto thee, all the dayes of this fraile life, which God hath giuen vnto thee. For thou must looke for no other matter of this life and of all thy labour.

Vers. 10. *Whatsoeuer thine hand findeth to doe, doe it according to thy strength. For there is neither worke nor deliberation, nor knowledge, nor wisdome in the graue, whether thou goeſt.*

Whatsoeuer thou knowest that thou oughtest or art able to doe for discharge of thy duetie toward God & thy neighbour, performe it to thy power and without delay. For that vncertaine time is at hand, wherein lying in the graue, thou shalt be able to doe nothing, no not so much as to thinke any thing, beeing depriued both of all skill to doe, and of all wisedome to deuise and consult.

Vers. 11. *Turning another way I saw vnder the sunne; that the race is not in the swift, nor the battell in the strong, no nor yet bread in the wise, nor riches in politike men, nor fauour in skilfull men: but there is a time & a chaunce happeneth to al men*, that is, things happen to all men, at such time and in such matter, as God hath appointed they shall happen.

And

And all men are not fitte for all things: And harken moreouer what a notable point I haue obserued, while I am carefully thinking about these matters; namely that man hath not in himselfe the vse of those powers either of mind or bodie, which God gaue vnto vs, either when we were borne, or afterward by labour. As for example neither they that haue actiue bodies haue it in their owne hands, to runne, nor souldier to be stout & valiant. Yea & though a man hauing those qualities vse them wel, yet the profite that commeth of them is not in his power that vseth them well. Hereof it is that sometime wise men lacke bread, and politike men riches, and skilfull men good fauour with other men. Therefore we must acknowledge that we receiue of God alone the onely giuer of euery commoditie & euery successe, both the aptnes to do this or that, and power to performe it, and the fruit that commeth of it.

Vers. 12. *For man also knoweth not his owne time: but as fishes that are taken in a harmefull net, & as small birds which are caught in a snare: as these, so men, I say, are intangled in an euill time, when it rusheth vpon them suddenlie.*

And this is so true, that men know not, what will befall them at this or that time, whereof there are very many witnesses. Whome, though they be prouident ynough, yet as seelie fishes are taken in the nette that is layed to destroy them, and poore birds in the snare vnawares, so, when the time appointed for their calamitie commeth vpon them, it taketh them in their carelesnesse and when they thinke least of it.

Vers. 13. *Yea this wisdome also haue I seene vnder the Sunne which is great vnto me,* that is, which I make great account of.

And although Gods prouidence ruleth in all things, yet how great vse here is of wisdome to serue Gods prouidence, & euen then when vnthankfull men are well dealt by, I will not stick to shew by a memorable and worthie example.

Vers. 14. There was a certaine *small citie, and in it a few men, and there came against it a great King, who besieged it, and built great forts against it.*

A very mightie King setting vpon a small citie of it

ſelfe and inhabited but with a few citizens, beſieged with a huge armie, & hauing made ſtrong bulwarkes, & other engins meete to aſſault cities, had caſt a trench about it.

Verſ. 15. *And there was found therein a poore wiſe man; who deliuered the citie by his wiſdome, but none remembred that man.*

And there was found in it a man, in deede of baſe condition (for God, as I ſaid euen now, beſtoweth his gifts vpon whome he will) but a man of great iudgement and counſell, whoſe wiſe counſell deliuered the citie from the ſiege. But O miſerable vnthankefull men. For among thoſe that were preſerued by him, there was not one found, who in remembrance of this ſo great a benefit made any recompence vnto this poore man.

Verſ. 16. *Then ſaide I, wiſdome is better then ſtrength, although the wiſdome of the poore be deſpiſed and his wordes be not heard.*

Then ſaide I. Although this wiſdome in the poore man were deſpiſed of theſe vnthankefull men, and there is no memorie reteyned of that notable fact, yet it is plaine that wiſdome is to be preferred before any ſtrength of bodie, or any other like thing.

Verſ. 17. *Therefore let the wordes of wiſe men in quiet*, that is, ſpeaking peaceablie and calmely, *be heard rather then the crye of him that beareth rule ouer fooles.*

Goe too then, let the orderly and quiet voice of wiſe men be heard, rather then the outeries of a fooliſh man that beareth rule among ſuch as are like him ſelfe.

Verſ. 18. *Wiſdome is better then inſtruments of warre, and one ſinner ouerturneth much good.*

Wiſdome is better then all warrelike engins: but contrariwiſe euen one man going awry wrappeth himſelfe and others in moſt extreme miſeries.

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 1. *As dead flyes cauſe the oyntment of the Apothecarie to ſtinke and to ſcraule, ſo him that is in eſtimation for wiſdome and glorie, a little follie*, that is, ſome ſmall fooliſh

act

act disgraceth.

BVT whosoeuer thou art that hast well begunne, looke well to it that thou continue to the end; for as dead flyes make the confection that is wrought by neuer so great Art of the Apothecarie to haue a stinking scumme, so a man before had in great estimation for wisdome, and commended of many, for some small fault yet foolishly committed, looseth all his credite.

Vers. 2. The hart of a wise man is at his right hand: & the hart of a foole at his left hand.

The hart of a wise man in all difficulties inclining as it were to his right hand telleth a man what is needeful for him to doe: but the mind of a foole is wilfully caryed to the left hand, and euen to euery euill and fond matter.

Vers. 3. Moreouer in the way wherin a foole walketh, his hart faileth, and he telleth vnto *all men that he is a foole.*

And they that haue once entred into the way that follie haue shewed vnto them, not onely doe not marke that they are out of the way, but also in deed & word, as it were with a loud voyce doe more & more testifie their madnes to all mē.

Vers. 4. If the spirit of him that ruleth come against thee, leaue not thy place. For lowlines causeth great sinnes to cease.

But contrariwise continue thou in wisdome, and therefore (for example be it spoken) if his mind be mooued against thee for anie cause who hath rule ouer thee, beware least the indignitie of the matter cause thee to forget that thou art a priuate man and placed in a lower roome. For a minde that cannot be prouoked suppresseth and restreyneth great mischiefes that otherwise were like to follow.

Vers. 5. There is an euil that I haue seene vnder the Sunne, which is an error that cōmeth forth from the sight of him that beareth rule, that is, a sore euill, such as are cōmitted by mighty Princes. And this example is none of those which seldome or neuer fal out, & therfore wherof there is no necessarie vse. For as for those manifold sorts of humane society, wherin one beareth rule to whome the rest are subiect, there is nothing more common in mens affaires, then (when euery man hath forgotten his duetie) insolencie in commaunding in those that are in authoritie, and stubburnesse in resisting in those

that are vnder authoritie. But they, to whome chiefe authoritie among men is graunted, doe offende worſt of all, and moſt daungerouſly, becauſe they, who haue rule ouer inferiours, can hardly ſteppe awrie from their duetie, without the deſtruction or at leaſt the daunger of the reſt that are vnder them.

Verſ. 20. *Folly is placed in great excellentie: and excellent men ſitte belowe.*

Hereof it commeth oftentimes, that moſt baſe men and ſuch as are not meete to rule themſelues, are ſet vp aboue other, and aduaunced to principall dignities and degrees: and men indued with greater gifts both of bodie and mind, lye as it were vnder their feete.

Verſ. 7. *I ſawe ſeruants on horsbacke and princes walking,* that is, on foote, *as ſeruants vpon the grouud.*

For I my ſelfe haue ſeene bonde men ſitte on horſebacke, and worthie men both of bloude, and good deſartes walke on foote.

Verſ. 8. *He that diggeth a pitte, ſhall fall into it: and him that breaketh a hedge, ſhall a Serpent bite.*

So commonly it falleth out, while no man being content with his owne lotte, euery man ſeeketh to make his owne commoditie, by another mans diſcommoditie. But none are more diſappointed then theſe ambitious men. For whoſoeuer diggeth vp a pitte for another man, at the length ſhal fall into it himſelfe, and whoſoeuer breaketh an hedge to get into another mans grounde, ſhall finde a ſerpent that will ſting him.

Verſ. 9. *He that remoueth ſtones, ſhall be made ſory by them, and he that cutteth downe trees, ſhall be in daunger by them.*

He that diggeth downe another mans wall, or remoueth land markes, ſhall receiue loſſe by them, and he that cutteth downe another mans trees, ſhalbe in ſome hazard in cutting them downe, by the goyng awrie of his hatchet.

Verſ. 10. *If the inſtrument be dull, and whoſe edge hath not bene whetted, it will euen make ſtrength ſtrong,* that is, it will not onely doe no good to him that cutteth, but it will ſo labour the ſtrongeſt man that is, that it wil tyre him to no profite. *But wiſedome is the excellencie of direction,* that is, it is it

especially,

especially, whereby thinges taken in hand, are well brought to their ende.

Finally, whosoeuer goeth vntowardly about any thing, that is, not being directed by wisedome, which alone, both foreshoweth the right ende of all things that are to be done, and pointeth out the instruments wereby they may & ought to be accõplished, he looseth his labour: euen like vnto him, who when he would cut downe any thing, taketh a dull hatcher, whose edge he hath not sharpned, & wearieth himselfe in vaine.

Vers. 11. *If a Serpent bite without a charme, there is no excellencie in him*, that is, hee is no better, *who is Lorde of his tongue*, that is, who abuseth his tongue as he liste, and is a talkeatiue man and giuen to speake euill.

There is also another, and that a verie necessarie vse of wisedome, in ruling the tongue, and especially in bridling the tongue that is giue to speake euill. For he is no lesse harmefull and to be feared, who taketh libertie to himselfe to blab out any thing of any man, then a serpent that secretly biteth a man in his way, and giueth him no warning by his hissing.

Vers. 12. *The words of the mouth of a wise man, are grace it selfe: but the lippes of a foole, swallowe him vp.*

And in deede a wise man so frameth his talke, that when he speaketh, his good grace in speaking commendeth him to al that heare him. But contrariwise a foole by his owne talke bringeth vpon himselfe destruction diuers waies.

Vers. 13. *The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishnesse, and the latter ende is wicked madnesse.*

For a foole beginning his talke with foolishnesse, endeth in madnesse, and that many wayes bewraying it selfe.

Vers. 14. *For a foole multiplyeth woordes, and yet man knoweth not what shall be, and who can tell him what shall be after him?*

Also hee maketh no ende of speaking, rashly promising any thing vnto himselfe, whereas notwithstanding man not only knoweth not of himselfe what shalbe afterward, neither yet by conference with any other man can fully vnderstand what is like to befall him in time to come.

Vers. 15. *The labour of fooles wearieth euery one of them, not*

knowing how to goe into the citie.

Finally, in vaine doe manie men wearie themselues, neuer atteining to the right ende, euen as men that being out of the right way, in blinde lanes, going vp and downe this way and that way, can neuer finde the way into the citie.

Vers. 16. *Woe to thee O Lande, whose King is a childe, and whose princes eate in the morning*, that is, beginne the day with pleasures and ryot.

But O vnhappie Realme, that art ruled by a King, who is a childe, either in age or in vnderstanding, being voyde of sense and experience: and whose princes beginne the day with pleasures, which they ought to haue begunne with taking counsell.

Vers. 17. *But O happie Realme, whose King is the sonne of welborne men*, that is, borne of noble and princely progenitours, *and whose princes eate in due time, for strength*, that is, to refresh the bodie, *and not for good fellowshipppe*, that is, not for riot.

But contrariwise, how blessed a dominion art thou, who hast a king of noble progenie and princely vertues, whose sober princes take meate in due season, not to pamper the bellie, but to refresh the bodie that it may be strong and fitte to attend vpon their waightie affaires.

Vers. 18. *By slouthfulnesse the roofe falleth to decay, and by hanging downe*, that is, idlenes, *of the handes the house droppeth*, that is, is rotted with the euesdropping.

By the negligence of slouthfull persons, the roofe of the house, by little and little goeth to decay, and, when the tyles are broken, and the eues boordes decayed, by the ydlenesse of the slouthfull owners that sitte with one hande wrapt in another, the walles of the houses rotte.

Vers. 39. *The bakers make bread for laughter, and wine cheereth life, and money answereth*, that is, contenteth *all men.*

What doth the most parte of men in the meane while? Surely, to the ende they may see how they perishe, of one side the bakers bake bread for manie, that is, the cookes dresse al kinds of meat, that by feeding without al care men may pamper the bellie, on the other side, wine in excesse

is powred out, and drinke, to make them merrie, who otherwise would not thinke their life to be any life. And because these thinges can not bee gotten, but by money which raigneth like a Queene, therefore this is the common labour, craft and skill of all men, how to get money, which, they that do possesse, thinke they possesse all thinges.

Vers. 20. *Despise not the King, no not in thy thought, and despise not a mightie man, no, not in thy inner chamber. For the byrde of heauen*, that is, that flyeth in the ayre, *shall carrie the voyce, the feathered foule*, I say, *shall declare the woorde*, that is, what thou didst say.

And these are no common faultes, but are euen incident vnto those, by whome they might and also ought to bee restrained, and brought into good order. But thou, who, as I haue shewed, must take a farre diuers course, although thou doe serue that King, in whome, these or anie the like faultes doe raigne, yet remember to vse discretion, and, though it be to thy selfe alone, yet speake no otherwise of him. then his authoritie requireth, because God hath set him, ouer thee, and his authoritie is from the Lord God. For although he vse it amisse, yet, is it lawfull for thee to forget thy place, that is, thy priuate condition, and that duetie that thou owest vnto him? Nay, if thou doe otherwise, be sure, that albeit thou haue spoken it, where no man can bewray thee, yet the very birdes shall rather bring it vnto him, then thou shalt carrie it away scotfree.

CHAPTER XI.

Vers. 1. *Cast thy bread vpon the face of the waters*, that is, vpon the waters that runne before thee. *For in the multitude of dayes*, that is, at length, and in processe of time, *thou shalt finde it againe.*

NOW, that which I haue often beaten vpon, concerning the right enioying of those good thinges, which God hath giuen to euery man for the vse of this life, I would haue you thus to vnderstande me, that euery man beare in minde, that hee was borne, not onely to haue regarde of himselfe

himselfe and those that belong vnto him, but also to relieue the necessitie of anie strangers whatsoeuer, as farre as hee is able, not following their example, who thinke it cast away, whatsoeuer they bestowe vpon poore straungers, or anie who can not recompense them the like againe. For contrariwise I commaunde, that euery one, not standing vpon these pretences, which most men vse to make for their couetousnesse, distrustfulnesse and hardnesse of heart, shoulde rather cast of their substance downe the streame, that is, hauing no regarde of vntoward excuses, which hinder the duetie of charitie, for I am well assured, that, what hee thinketh to bee lost, hee shall at the length finde there layde vp, where he shall receiue it againe with great aduauntage.

Vers. 2. *Giue a portion*, that is, distribute of thy goodes, *to seuen and also to eight, because thou knowest not what euill shall be vpon the earth*, that is, howe great want may come.

I forbidde thee also, when it standeth vpon helping of others, to thinke vpon sparing. Nay rather I counsayle thee, without taking too neere and too streight an account of the number of the poore, to affourde thy helpe not onely to one, but euen to seauen or eight, if occasion so require: yea, I would haue rich men in bestowing their liberalitie, to haue regard not onely of the present want of the poore, but also to prouide for them in time to come, as not knowing, whether some harder times be like to fall vpon them. Much lesse ought rich men to pinch in their liberalitie, for feare of some famine that peraduenture may come.

Vers. 3. *If the cloudes be full of rayne, they will powre it vpon the earth, and if a tree fall*, that is, the fruite of a tree, *towarde the South or to the North, towarde what place soeuer it falleth, there it shall be.*

Therefore, followe those full cloudes, which water the earth by powring out raine euery where, without making any difference: and those bountifull trees, whose fruite, what side soeuer it falleth on, whether on the South or on the North, feedeth both the one and the other.

Vers. 4. *He that obserueth the winde, shall not sowe, and he that regardeth the cloudes shall not reape.*

Surely,

Surely this bountifulnes is like the seede time, after which followeth harueſt, and there is alway time to doe good. See therefore that no lingering, pretending the name of wisdome let thee from this dutie; neither be like vnto them, of whome one ſort looſeth the ſeed time, while they waite for a winde, others miſſe of harueſt while they tary for a more fit opportunitie from the cloudes.

Verſ. 5. As thou knoweſt not which is the way of the winde, and as thou knoweſt not the bones in the wombe of her that is with child: ſo thou knoweſt not the worke of God, that worketh all things.

Rather commit thy ſelfe and al that thou haſt to the prouidence of God, the reaſon and times whereof, there is no cauſe for thee to maruell though thou canſt not attaine vnto, conſidering that thou knoweſt not the way of the winde that bloweth euery day, and howe the bones growe and are hardened in the womb of a woman that is great with child. Howe then art thou able to reach vnto the force of Gods power that worketh all things?

Verſ. 6. Sow thy ſeed betimes in the morning, and in the euening let not thine hand reſt for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall bee good this or that, or whether both ſhalbe a like good.

Euery time I ſay is ſeaſonable to beſtow a benefite. Therfore in the morning ſowe this ſeede of bountifulnes, and let not the euening finde thine hands idle. For thou knoweſt not whether of theſe two will be more gainefull vnto the, or whether thou ſhall reape an harueſt of them both.

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 1. *Surely light is ſweet, and it is good for the eies to ſee the ſunne.*

FInally, that I may at the length make an end of ſpeaking, for this matter thus I conclude. Surely the light of this life is ſweet, and it is a very pleaſant thing to looke with the eies vpon this light of the Sunne.

Verſ. 2. But if a man liue manie yeares, and in them all reioice, and yet remember the daies of darknes, that they are many. whatſoeuer ſhall befall him, he will thinke it vanitie.

But although a man liue verie long & as pleaſantly as may

be

be, yet if he remember how great part of his life he hath paſſed with care and griefe, as it were in darkenes ouer ſhadowing the light of his life, and compare the time of that his long life with the ſpace wherein being dead he ſhall lie in the darkenes of the graue, ſurely he will thinke, that whatſoeuer ſweetnes he felt in his life, was but vanitie induring for a ſmall time.

Verſ. 3. *Therefore reioice ô young man in the daies of thine youth, and let thine hart cheere thee*, that is, take thy fill of whatſoeuer pleaſures thou likeſt: *and walke in the waies of thine owne hart*, that is, ſo order thy life as thin owne mind ſhall councell thee: *and according to the ſight of thine eis, But know that for all theſe things God will bring thee to iudgement.*

Go too now therefore ye young men (for I thinke I ought eſpeciallie to ſpeake to theſe, whome aboue all other the deceitfull ſhadow of this life doth beguile) and ſay, and ſpare not, this our youth will ſhortly end, let vs ſpend it in ioy, let vs runne ouer this time of our youth, merrily and as we our ſelues like beſt. Whatſoeuer pleaſeth our eies, that let vs deſire. But ô young man whoſoeuer thou art, theſe are the things, for which thou maiſt be ſure thou ſhalt be brought to Gods iudgement ſeate to anſwere for them.

Verſ. 4. *Rather take away wrath*, that is, ſuch things as prouoke the wrath of God *from thine heart, and turne away calamitie from thy fleſh*, that is, from thy ſelfe. *For childhood and youth are vanitie.*

But what is more fearefull, then to be brought before the iudgement of almighty God there to be condemned? Therefore ſee rather, that all thoſe things be farre from thy mind, that may prouoke the wrath of God, and turne from thy ſelfe theſe puniſhments. For the flowre of this thy youth will ſoone vaniſh away: and that will ſtande for euer which hee ſhall once determine of thee.

Verſ. 5. *And remember thy creator in the daies of thy youth, before the daies of miſerie come, and the yeares draw neere, of which thou maieſt ſay, I haue no pleaſure in them.*

And thou ſhalt in this ſort prouide for thy ſelfe, if in thy very youth, and before that miſerie come which verie age bringeth vpon thee, and the number of thy yeares increaſing.

ſing, thou come to that point, that euen thine owne life bee vnpleaſant vnto thee, thou ſet alwaies before thy mind, both the power and goodnes of thy creatour.

Verſ. 6. While the ſunne is not darke, nor the light, nor the Moone, nor the ſtarres, nor the cloudes returne after raine.

I ſay, before thine eies be ſo dimme that the moſt bright Sunne, the Moone and the ſtarres cannot be diſcerned by thee, and thine eies being bleared, one humour may fall downe into them vpon another.

Verſ. 7. In the daie, that is, the time, *wherein the keepers*, that is, the proppes, *of the houſe ſhall ſhake, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelues, and the grinders ſhall ceaſe, becauſe they ſhal be diminiſhed, and they waxe darke that looke through the windowes.*

Euen then when thoſe two poſtes (that is, the two legges, that beare vp the bodie as it were the vpper building of the houſe) ſhall tremble and faint: and mens raines that were before verie ſtrong, ſhall ſtoope, and hauing loſt thy teeth, thy grinders ſhall not be able to chew thy meate, being both in number fewer and for ſtrength weaker, and the apples of thine eies, which out of the hollow places of thine eies as out of windowes beheld all things, that came in the waie, be ouerſpred with darkenes.

Verſ. 8. And the gates without ſhall be ſhut with the ſmall ſound of the grinding: and the old man ſhall riſe at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of ſinging ſhal be abaſed: that is, the inſtrument of the voice ſhall no more ſing, but vtter a ſmall and low ſound.

And thoſe two leaues, to wit, the lippes, ſhall ſcarſe open a way for the voice: and the gummes ſhal make a verie ſmal noiſe in eating: and the olde man ſhall bee awaked with the leaſt voice of a birde, the throte and other inſtruments of the voice, that were wont to ſing ſweetlie, ſhall make a ſlender and low ſound.

Verſ. 4. And they, that is, olde men, *ſhal be afraide of the high thing*, that is, anie little ſtone, or other thing, that ſticketh vp in the ground, whereon they grow, *and terrours ſhall be vnto them in the waie: and the almond tree ſhal bud, and the graſſehopper ſhall be a burden vnto him, and the appetite ſhall bee deſtroyed,*

destroied, because man goeth to the house of his age, and the mourners shall go about in the streete.

The feete shall go as if they were readie to fall, and shall be afraide of euerie litle stone that sticketh vp: when the spring driueth away the sharpe winter, the almond tree indeede shall bud, and the grasshoppers shall burst with singing, but the old man shall loth all things, hasting to returne to that his long home and euen now waited for of the mourners, without in the streete.

Vers. 10. *So long as the siluer cord is not vntied, nor the golden dish broken: nor the wheel broken aboue the cistern.*

See, I say, and looke to these things thou young man, before that siluer line, whereby thou draweſt breath be vntied, and that golden dish of the heart be broken, wherein the verie vitall spirite is conteined: and the braine out of which as out of a water pot the vapours being dissolued fall downe into the stomack as into a well: to conclude, before that continuall going and comming of the vapours which rising out of the body ascend vpward, and from thence againe discend into the lower parts as it were into a cisterne, being ceased, death doe follow.

Vers. 11. *And before the dust returne to earth as it was, and the spirit returne to God that gaue it.*

When the bodie shall returne to dust, from whence it was taken, and the spirit go backe vnto God from whome it proceeded.

Vers. 12. *Vanitie of vanities*, that is, most vaine, *saith the Preacher: all things I say, are vanitie.*

Therefore that is moste true wherewith I began this Sermon, to witt, that all things in this worlde, are flitting and transitorie, and full of moste vaine vanitie.

Vers. 13. *And the more wise the Preacher was, he did moreouer teach the people knowledg and made them hearken*, that is, put foorth him selfe to be heard, *and searched*, that is, gaue him selfe to search out thinges, *and set in order manie parables.*

There are also other thinges beside and those not a fewe, whereby according to that wisdome wherewith God hath indued not your Preacher among other men, it likewise appeareth

peareth that I haue beene very carefull to teach you and make you vnderstand, whatsoeuer I had found out by diligent search, for which vse also I writt verie manie notable lessons studiouslie gathered together.

Vers. 14. *For the Preacher sought to find out words of desire.* that is hee tooke paines to find out such things, as worthily are to be desired, *and a writing* that is, *vprightnes and words of truth.*

And in this sermon I propounded to my selfe to open that vnto you, whereunto as the thing of all other most to bee desired, all our desires and indeuours were chiefly to be referred: I meane, to deliuer vnto you written in this booke the true and certen opinion of the attaining the soueraigne good.

Vers. 15. *The words of the wise are as goads & as nailes fastned the words of the authors of the collections,* that is, of them by whom they were gathered *which are deliuered by one pastors,* to wit, by God that only gouernour of his Israell.

For the admonitions of wise men are as goades, whereby both the slouthfull are pricked forward and they that runne of their owne accord are prouoked to make more speed and as it were with the help of nailes those sayings are driuen in deeper and stick faster, which are out of manifold places gathered by diuerse teachers, but indited by that one Pastor of Israell, I meane God.

Vers. 16. *Therefore my soonne, be sufficiently warned by them; for there is no end of making bookes: and much reading is a toile to the flesh.*

I woulde therefore haue euery of you, whome I imbrace as a father doth his children, so to rest in these things, that in this matter you require no more. For there is no end of much writing: but the more of these kinde of matters a man knoweth, the more thoughtes shall hee intangle him selfe with all, which will neuer satisfie the minde, but fill it with endlesse cares.

Vers. 17. *The end of the word and of all hearing is* that of this sermon, and of those things you haue heard, *Feare God and keepe his commaundements, for this is the whole of man.*

Now all that you haue heard in this Sermon in effect tendeth to this, and may be compriſed in theſe few woordes, Feare God, and be diligent to keepe his commandements. For this is the onely thing, which euery man ought to looke vnto and to direct all their indeauours vnto it, if they will be partakers of true felicitie.

Verſ. 18. For God will bring euery worke to iudgement, of euerie ſecret thing, whether it be good or euill.

For no man thinketh or doth anie thing, whether it be ſecretlie, or openly, whether it be well or ill done, whereof God almightie will not aske account at his iudgement ſeate and whereof euery man in this time ſhal not giue an account.

GOD BE PRAISED.